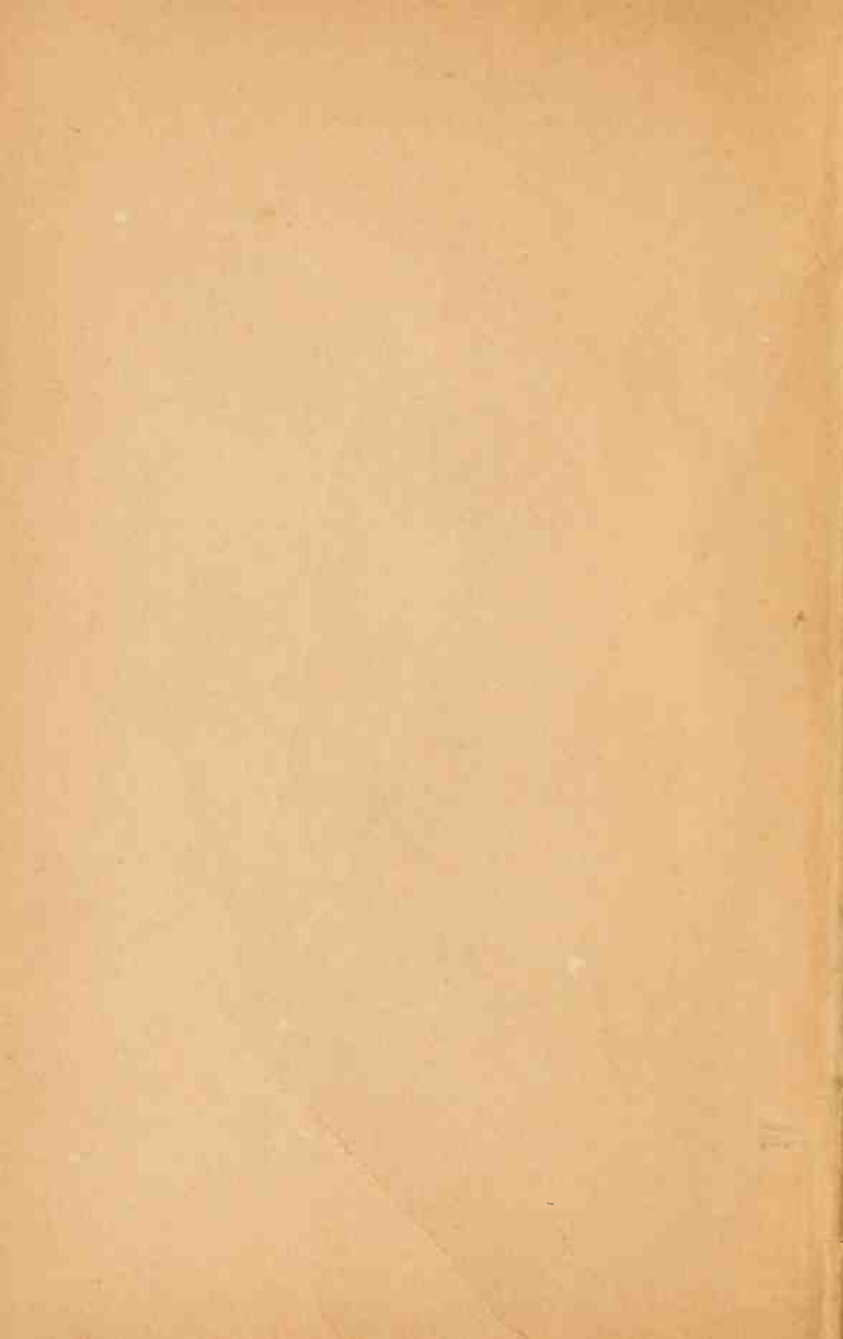


Elise Hentzelmann.

Davenport

Dec

1843.



H O M E

A STORY OF NEW ENGLAND LIFE

BY

MISS SEDGWICK

AUTHOR OF "REDWOOD," "HOPE LESLIE," ETC.

NEW EDITION.



NEW YORK
WORTHINGTON CO., 747 BROADWAY
1890

CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. GOING TO HOUSEKEEPING	1
II. A GLIMPSE AT FAMILY GOVERNMENT	17
III. A FAMILY DINNER	33
IV. THE REVERSE OF THE PICTURE	52
V. A DEDICATION SERVICE	59
VI. SUNDAY AT MR. BARCLAY'S	65
VII. A TREE STORY	79
VIII. A DARK DAY	89
IX. A HOME FOR THE HOMELESS	103
X. A PEEP INTO THE HIVE	122
XI. GOING HOME TO GREENBROOK	132
XII. CROSS-PURPOSES	147
XIII. FAMILY LETTERS	161
XIV. THE CONCLUSION	173



H O M E.



CHAPTER I.

GOING TO HOUSE-KEEPING.

My house a cottage more
Than palace ; and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.

COWLEY.

IN a picturesque district of New England — it matters not in which of the Eastern States, for in them all there is such unity of character and similarity of condition, that what is true of one may be probable of all, — in one of them there is a sequestered village called Greenbrook. The place derives its name from a stream of water which bears this descriptive appellation, —

“As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink,
Had given their stain to the wave they drink;
And they, whose meadows it murmurs through,
Have named the stream from its own fair hue.”

There is one particularly beautiful spot, where this little river, or rather brook (for it is not wider than the *Tiber* at Washington),

winds through a lovely meadow, and then stretches round a rocky peninsula, curving in and out, and lingering as if it had a human heart and loved that which it enriched. On a gentle slope, rising from the meadow and catching the first rays of the morning sun, stood an old-fashioned parsonage, about half a mile from the village, and at right angles with it, so that its road and shaded sidewalks, and the goings-out and comings-in of his flock, could be overlooked by the good pastor. Parson Draper's were not the days of agricultural and horticultural societies, and just as he received the place, he was content to hold and leave it. He cut the hay from the meadow, and pastured a few sheep in the beautiful wood of maples, oaks, and beeches, that sheltered him from the north-west wind, where, if they did not find the sweetest pasture in the world, they looked prettily, cropping their scanty food from the rocky knolls, or grouped together in the shaded dells.

The good man, according to his views of them, performed his duties faithfully. He read diligently large books of divinity, preached two sermons (never an old one) every Sabbath, was punctual at weddings and funerals, and abstracted no time from these sacerdotal offices to improve his rugged garden, or till

his little farm. He had but two children,—the one a worthless son, and the other a girl, a most dutiful and gentle creature, who married a merchant, lived prosperously in a city for two or three years, and then returned a widow, penniless, and with an only son, to her father's house. She bore her reverses meekly, and directed all her energies to one object,—the *sine qua non* of a New England mother,—a good education for her son. The boy, William Barelay, found only happiness in the change. He was released from what seemed to him a prison, a nursery in a narrow city street, and permitted to feed grandfather's sheep, to harness his horse, sometimes to ride and drive him; in short, to employ those faculties that employed are blessings, and unemployed, tormentors.

The parsonage, as we have said, was apart from the village. Either because of his early solitude, or through the leading of his mother, who, turned back from the world, loved to commune with God in his works, or from an innate love of natural beauty, William Barelay knit his heart to this home of his childhood; and when his grandfather died, and the place was sold, and he was compelled to leave it, he felt much as might our first parents, when from Paradise they “took their solitary way.”

His mother had a pittance, and this, with straining every nerve, and now and then a lift from a friend, enabled her to go on with her favorite project. She and her son were received in the families of her friends, and changed their abode according to the liberality or convenience of their patrons. But William was kept at his books, and this repaid her for every sacrifice and every exertion. William, however, was not of a temper to brook this strain on his mother, and partial dependence on others. As soon as he was of an age to comprehend it, he renounced the idea of what is technically called an education, the four years at college, threw himself on his own exertions, and by *hook and by crook*, that is, by infinite ingenuity and diligence, and by the most severe self-denial and frugality, he supported himself, obtained the rudiments of an excellent education, and learned the art of printing. At the age of twenty-two he was the conductor of a valuable printing-press in the city of New York, in partnership with Norton its proprietor, and with a reasonable prospect of a joint property in the concern. In the mean time, his earnings were sufficient to enable him to maintain a family and *go ahead*. Thankful ought we to be, that in our favored land a working man need not wait till

he be bald or gray before he may, with prudence, avail himself of the blessed institution of marriage; — that if, like William Barclay, he be capable, diligent, frugal, and willing to dispense with superfluities, he may, while hope is unblighted, resolution vigorous, and love in its early freshness, assume the responsibilities of a married man. In Europe, — ay, in what *was* “merry England,” it is not so; the kind order of nature and Providence is baffled, and the working man, be he “capable, diligent, and frugal,” has an alms-house in his perspective, or the joyless alternative, a life of safe and pining singleness.

“And is this our *home*?” said Mrs. Barclay to her husband, as they entered a small, newly built, two-story house in Greenwich Street.

“Yes, dear Anne; and if it were but in Greenbrook, and a little stream before it, and an oak wood on one side, and a green lane to the road on the other, we should stand a good chance at love in a cottage.”

“I see how it is, William; I have yet to cure you of your homesickness for the old parsonage. Who knows but we may go there some time or other? In the mean time, let us try if we cannot be happy with love in a small house, instead of a cottage.”

“You could make the happiness of any

home to me, Anne. Shifted about as I have been from pillar to post, I scarcely know what home is, from experience ; but it is a word that, to my mind, expresses every motive and aid to virtue, and indicates almost every source of happiness. I am sure of content ; but will not you, Anne, contrast this little dwelling with your father's spacious house, and when you look into the dirty street, or into our poor, cramped, ten-feet yard, will you not pine to see the golden harvests we left waving on the sunny slopes of Greenbrook, or for the beautiful view, from your window, of meadow and mountain ? Will you not miss the pleasant voices of home ? — the footsteps of sisters and brothers ? ”

“ Yes,” replied the wife, smiling through the tears that gushed from nature's fount at the picture of her father's house : — “ Yes, I shall miss all this, — for who ever did, or ever can, forget a happy home ? I may even shed many tears, William ; but they will be like the rain that falls when the sun shines, — there will be no cloud over the heart. I am sure I shall never repent the promise made this night three weeks, forsaking all others to cleave to you alone.”

“ I trust you will not, Anne. But I cannot help wishing I was not obliged at once to put

you to such a test. This house seems to me smaller than when I hired it; this parlor is scarcely big enough to turn in."

"Now it struck me as just of the right size. I always had a fancy for a snug parlor. Nothing looks so forlorn as a large, desolate, cold, half-furnished, shabby parlor."

Mr. Barclay smiled. "You have certainly contrived, Anne, to make the large parlor look disagreeable."

"And I will try my best to make the small one agreeable."

A look from her husband indicated his belief that she could not fail. "And can you say any thing for this little bedroom?" he asked, opening the door into an adjoining apartment.

After an instant's survey she replied, "It suits me exactly."

"But that is an ugly jut."

"It's not pretty, but how neatly the bureau fits in: and this nice little closet, what a blessing! a grate too! I did not expect this. It suits me exactly," she repeated, with hearty emphasis. "But perhaps you did not mean this for our apartment."

"You must decide that. There is a room above this precisely like it."

"Then this shall be for mother; she minds

stairs and we do not. And here she shall have her rocking-chair and Bible, and I trust she will have a happy home after all."

This "after all" meant years of miserable shifting and changing, which old Mrs. Barclay had endured with the patience of a martyr. No wonder William Barclay felt grateful to his wife when he perceived his mother's happiness was her first care. He told her so.

"Wait," she said, "till I deserve your thanks. But now tell me where this little passage leads to? to the kitchen!—this is nice! I could not bear to think of thrusting Martha down into one of these New York cellar kitchens; they are so dark and dismal, after being used to our light, airy, sociable country kitchens. Martha will be delighted."

Mr. Barclay confessed he had made a sacrifice to secure a pleasant apartment for Martha, a young girl whom his wife (in country phrase) had "taken to bring up." "I had to decide," he said, "between two houses of equal rent, — the apartments in the other were larger than these, but the kitchen was under ground, and would have seemed dismal to Martha, and I knew you would wish to begin house-keeping with as much happiness as possible beneath your roof."

“At your old tricks, William, doing kind acts and giving the credit to another. However, I have generosity enough to approve this sacrifice of a little for us, to a great deal for Martha. Mother says there would not be half so much complaining of help, if the master and mistress had a religious sense of their duties to them, and took proper pains to promote their happiness. Home should be the sweetest of all words even to the humblest member of a family.”

This sentiment was echoed from William Barclay's heart and tongue, and then the young pair proceeded to examine together their furniture, which had been purchased by the husband according to a few general directions from the wife, the funds being furnished by her father. We shall not give an inventory, but merely note that there were no superfluities, — no gewgaws of any description; no mantel-glass, ornamental-lamp, vase of Paris flowers, tawdry pictures: such are sometimes seen where there is a lamentable deficiency of substantial comforts. But there was, what in these *dressed-up* houses is sacrificed to show, — ample stores of household linen, fine mattresses, as nice an apparatus for ablutions as a disciple of Combe could wish, jugs, basins, and tubs large enough, if not to

silence, to drown a travelling Englishman ; and finally one luxury, which long habit and well cultivated taste had rendered essential to happiness, — a book-case filled with well-selected and well-bound volumes. They paused before it, while Mrs. Barclay ran over the titles of some of the books: “‘History of England,’ ‘Universal History,’ ‘Marshall’s Washington,’ ‘American Revolution,’ ‘Shakespeare,’ ‘Milton,’ ‘Pope,’ ‘Addison,’ ‘Goldsmith,’ ‘Fénelon,’ ‘Taylor,’ ‘Law,’ ‘Johnson’s Dictionary,’ ‘Calmet’s Dictionary,’ ‘Lempriere,’ ‘Biographical Dictionary.’ O what a capital Atlas! How in the world, William, did you contrive to afford so many books? When father made an estimate of the cost of our furniture, he allowed twenty-five dollars for books. That, he said, would buy a Bible, the histories of England and America, a cookery book, and dictionary, — quite enough, he said, for a nest egg.”*

“Your father is frugal, Anne, and so must we be; but we have a right to select the department in which we prefer sparing, and that is not books. Since I have earned more than I was obliged to spend, I have made a yearly

* The father-in-law’s allowance exceeded that which Byron allows to the intellectual wants of women, by the two histories and the dictionary.

investment in books, as the stock which would yield the best income. I had thus accumulated those heavy volumes on the lower shelves: and as ladies sometimes think heavy books heavy reading, I filled up the case with such as I hoped would suit your taste, and profit us both. All these were bought with your money."

"All these! how was that possible?"

"I will tell you. In purchasing your furniture, my dear wife, whenever two articles were offered of equal intrinsic value, the one ornamental and the other plain, I bought the plain one, and passed over the saving made to the book fund. For instance, I was offered a remarkably pretty Geneva clock, which cost fifty dollars in Paris, for thirty dollars. A clock I thought essential to the punctual arrangement of house affairs; and to convince myself of the propriety of buying this particular clock, this *bargain*, I reasoned as people do when they would persuade themselves to that which in their secret souls they know is not quite right. 'I have bought nothing ornamental; surely we have a right to one indulgence of this sort: I may never meet with such a bargain, again; it will just suit Anne's taste.' This last thought turned the scale, and I was on the point of concluding the purchase when the

master of the shop said, 'If you really want the clock for a timepiece merely, here is an article of excellent mechanism, which costs only five dollars.' I shut my eyes against the pretty Geneva clock, bought the five-dollar article, hung it up in the kitchen, and with the money saved I purchased that row of books. Instead of twenty-five dollars' worth of glass and gilding, we have some of the best productions of the best minds. Instead of a poor gratification of our vanity, or at best of our eyes, we have a productive capital, from which we may derive exhaustless pleasure, which hundreds may share, and which those who come after us may enjoy. Oh, who can estimate the value of a book!"

"Books are your Penates, William."

"If so, Anne, I have greatly the advantage of the ancients. Their household gods were dumb idols, — mine have living and immortal souls."

Mr. Barclay was a printer and might magnify his art; but what honor is not due to that art which makes the spirits of the departed our familiar companions and instructors, which realizes the doctrine of metempsychosis, and transfuses the souls of the departed into the living.

"Anne, you do not tell me whether you are satisfied with my selection."

"I see but one deficiency."

"Oh, a Bible! You do not think I have omitted that. No, that I consider as essential to a home as the foundation-stone to an edifice. But the family Bible is for daily use, and has its proper station in the parlor. Neither have I omitted the other item on your father's list; the cookery book is on a shelf in the kitchen, with a few other instructive and entertaining volumes for Martha's use. I believe that whatever tends to improve the minds and hearts of domestics will, to say the worst of it, not injure their service; and that every wise provision for their happiness multiplies the chances of their attachment and fidelity. We are novices, Anne, and may be wrong; but at any rate we will try it."

Mrs. Barclay was a loving and, with good reason, a trustful wife, and ready to co-operate with her husband in all his benevolent purposes. They looked at the neat *spare room*, which, according to the fashion of their fathers they had consecrated to hospitality; and, after pleasing themselves with the expectation, that this and that relative or friend would occasionally occupy it, they returned to the parlor, and naturally fell to the retrospect of the long and checkered track by which Providence had led them to this happy

beginning of their married life. Perhaps this review was for the hundredth time; but it mattered not. Such subjects never lose their interest for the parties concerned. To others there was nothing striking in the history of their quiet lives; but circumstances, to the individuals they affect, take the hue of their feelings; and glowing hopes and deep emotions produce an effect on ordinary events resembling the alternations of shadows and sunbeams on a familiar landscape.

Mrs. Barclay was one of the ten children of a rich farmer; but there is nothing appalling to the most modest aspirant in the riches of a New England farmer, and the little, sweet-tempered, bright Anne Hyde was very early (so early that it seemed to him as a morning dream) the tenant and joint proprietor of all William Barclay's castles in the air. And he seemed to her, in the memory of her childhood, to run, like a golden thread, through all its web. She fondly recalled the time when, one bitter cold day, he left a skating party to drag her home on his sled; and that unlucky day when she fell in climbing over the fence, tore her frock, and spilled her strawberries, and he refilled her basket from his, and took her home to his gentle mother to mend the rent; thus saving her from disgrace with her own

mother, whose temper, poor woman, was a little the worse for the wear and tear of ten children. And well she remembered the time when, in choosing sides for spelling, he chose her before her pretty competitor, Fanny Smith, who was certainly the best speller ; and their standing together at poor Lucy Grey's funeral, and crying so bitterly ; and the next day their tying up a wreath of apple-blossoms and laying it on her grave ; and their first singing-school ; and though at meeting he sat with the bass and she with the treble, she never heard any voice but his. All she could not remember was the time when she did not love him. But it mattered not when or where the starting-point was, in the snows of winter or the pleasant summer field, in the school or churchyard, when the heart was merry or sad ; certain it was, their affection had grown with their growth and the stream that was now to flow in one deep, inseparable current, was as pure and fresh as when it first gushed forth from its separate founts.

The Barclays closed their first evening at home by reading together in that holy book whose truths and precepts were to inform and govern their lives. They then knelt at the domestic altar, while William Barclay, in a tone of cheerful, manly devotion, dedicated his

home to Him "who setteth the solitary in families," and from that day it was hallowed by domestic worship.

Few persons, probably, have thought so much as William Barclay of the economy of domestic happiness. He had lived in various families, and had seen much waste and neglect of the means of virtue and happiness which Providence supplies through the social relations. He had made a chart for his future conduct, by which he hoped to escape at least some of the shoals and quicksands on which others make shipwreck. He believed that a household, governed in obedience to the Christian social law, would present as perfect an image of heaven, as the infirmity of human nature, and the imperfections in the constitution of human affairs, would admit. That he purposed well, is certain; how far he succeeded, will be imperfectly disclosed in the following pages.

CHAPTER II.

A GLIMPSE AT FAMILY GOVERNMENT.

Pour forth thy fervors for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resigned.

JOHNSON.

THE skilful cultivator discerns in the germination of the bud the perfection, or the disease, that a superficial observer would first perceive in the ripening or the blighted fruit. And the moral observer, if equally skilled, might predict the manhood from the promise of the youth. Few are so skilled, and we seldom turn over ten years of life without surprise at the development of qualities we had not perceived. The happy accidents — they could not be called virtues, but rather the result of circumstances — have vanished like the dews of morning. The good-natured, light-hearted, generous youth, as his cares increased and his health abated, has become petulant, gloomy, and selfish; the gay, agreeable girl, moping and censorious. There were many who wondered, that persons who seemed nothing extraordinary in their youth, should turn out as the Barelays had; and they wondered too, how in the world it was that every thing went

right with the Barclays; and then the puzzle was solved in the common way, — “It was their luck.” They did not see that the Barclays had begun right, that they had proposed to themselves rational objects, and had pursued them with all the power of conscience and of an unslacking energy.

That happy if not happiest portion of married life, when the thousand clustering joys of parents are first felt, when toil is hope without weariness, passed brightly away with them. Twelve years had thus passed; their cares were multiplied, and their enjoyments, a hundred-fold. Mr. Barclay’s accumulating responsibilities sometimes weighed heavily upon him. He was, like most persons of great sensibility, of an apprehensive temper. The little ailments of his children were apt to disturb his serenity, and, for the time being, it was destroyed by the moral diseases that break out in the healthiest subjects. His wife was of a happier temperament. Her equal, sunny temper soon rectified the disturbed balance of his. She knew that the constitution of weak and susceptible childhood was liable to moral and physical maladies, and that, *if well got through*, it became the more robust and resisting for having suffered them. Her husband knew this too, and was consoled by it, — after the danger was past.

Our friends were now in a convenient house, adapted to their very much improved fortune and increased family. The family were assembled in a back parlor. Mrs. Barclay was at some domestic employment, to facilitate which Martha had just brought in a tub of scalding water. Charles, the eldest boy, with a patience most *unboyish*, was holding a skein of yarn for grandmamma to wind; Alice, the eldest girl, was arranging the dinner-table in the adjoining room; Mary, the second, was amusing the baby at the window; Willie was saying his letters to Aunt Betsey;—all were busy, but the busiest was little Haddy, a sweet child of four years, who was sitting in the middle of the room on a low chair, and who, unobserved by the rest, and herself unconscious of wrong, was doing deadly mischief. She had taken a new, unfinished, and very precious kite belonging to her brother Wallace, cut a hole in the centre, thrust into it the head of her pet Maltese kitten, and was holding it by its fore paws and making it dance on her lap; the little animal looking as demure and as formal as one of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honor in her ruff. At this critical juncture Wallace entered in search of his kite. One word of prefatory palliation for Wallace. The kite was the finest he had ever possessed;

it had been given him by a friend, and that friend was waiting at the door, to string and fly it for him. At once the ruin of the kite, and the indignity to which it was subjected, flashed on him, and perhaps little Haddy's very satisfied air exasperated him. In a breath he seized the kitten, and dashed it into the tub of scalding water. His father had come in to dinner, and paused at the open door of the next room. Haddy shrieked, — the children all screamed, — Charles dropped grandmamma's yarn, and, at the risk of his own hand, rescued the kitten; but seeing its agony, with most characteristic consideration, he gently dropped it in again, and thus put the speediest termination to its sufferings.

The children were all sobbing. Wallace stood pale and trembling. His eye turned to his father, then to his mother, then was riveted on the floor. The children saw the frown on their father's face, more dreaded by them than ever was flogging, or dark closet with all its hobgoblins.

"I guess you did not mean to: did you, Wally?" said little Haddy, whose tender heart was so touched by the utter misery depicted on her brother's face, that her pity for him overcame her sense of her own and pussy's wrongs. Wallace sighed deeply, but spoke no

word of apology or justification. The children looked at Wallace, at their father, and their mother, and still the portentous silence was unbroken. The dinner-bell rung. "Go to your own room, Wallace," said his father. "You have forfeited your right to a place among us." Creatures who are the slaves of their passions are, like beasts of prey, fit only for solitude."

"How long must Wallace stay upstairs?" asked Maddy, affectionately holding back her brother, who was hastening away.

"Till he feels assured," replied Mr. Barclay, fixing his eye sternly on Wallace, "that he can control his hasty temper; at least so far as not to be guilty of violence towards such a dear good little girl as you are, and murderous cruelty to an innocent animal; — till, sir, you can give me some proof that you dread the sin and danger of yielding to your passions so much that you can govern them. The boy is hopeless," he added in a low voice to his wife, as Wallace left the room.

"My dear husband! hopeless at ten years old, and with such a good, affectionate heart as his? We must have patience."

A happy combination for children is there in an uncompromising father and an all-hoping mother. The family sat down to table. The parents were silent, serious, unhappy. The

children caught the infection, and scarcely a word was said above a whisper. There was a favorite dish on the table, followed by a nice pudding. They were eaten, not enjoyed. The children realized that it was not the good things they had to eat, but the kind looks, the innocent laugh, and cheerful voice, that made the pleasure of the social meal.

"My dear children," said their father, as he took his hat to leave them, "we have lost all our comfort to-day: have not we?"

"Yes, sir, — yes, sir," they answered in a breath.

"Then learn one lesson from your poor brother. Learn to dread doing wrong. If you commit sin, you must suffer, and all that love you must suffer with you; for every sin is a violation of the laws of your Heavenly Father, and he will not suffer it to go unpunished."

If Mr. and Mrs. Barclay had affected their concern, to overawe and impose on their children, they would not have been long deceived; for children, being themselves sincere, are clear-sighted. But they knew that the sadness was real; they felt that it was in accordance with their parents' characters and general conduct. They never saw them ruffled by trifles. Many a glass had been broken, many a greasy knife dropped, many a disappointment and in-

convenience incurred, without calling forth more than a gentle rebuke. These were not the things that moved them, or disturbed the domestic tranquillity; but the ill temper, selfishness, unkindness, or any moral fault of the children, was received as an affliction.

The days passed on. Wallace went to school as usual, and returned to his solitude, without speaking or being spoken to. His meals were sent to his room, and whatever the family ate, he ate. For the Barclays took care not to make rewards and punishments out of eating and drinking, and thus associate the duties and pleasures of a moral being with a mere animal gratification. "But ah!" he thought, as he walked up and down his apartment, while eating his pie or pudding, "how different it tastes from what it does at table!" and though he did not put it precisely in that form, he felt what it was that "sanctified the food." The children began to venture to say to their father, whose justice they dared not question, "How long Wally has stayed upstairs!" and Charles, each day, eagerly told how well Wallace behaved at school. His grandmother could not resist her desire to comfort him; she would look into his room to see "if he were well," "if he were warm enough," or "if he did not want something."

The little fellow's moistening eye and tremulous voice evinced his sensibility to her kindness, but he resolutely abstained from asking any mitigation of his punishment. He overheard his Aunt Betsey (Mrs Barclay's maiden sister) say, "It is a sin, and ridiculous besides, to keep Wallace mewed up so, just for a little flash of temper. I am sure he had enough to provoke a saint."

"We do not keep him mewed up, Betsey," replied Mrs. Barclay, "nor does he continue mewed up, for a single flash of temper; but because, with all his good resolutions, his passionate temper is constantly getting the better of him. There is no easy cure for such a fault. If Wallace had the seeds of a consumption, you would think it the extreme of folly not to submit to a few weeks' confinement, if it afforded a means of ridding him of them; and how much worse than a consumption is a moral disease!"

"Well," answered the sister, "you must do as you like, but I am sure we never had any such fuss at home;—we grew up, and there was an end on't."

"But, maybe," thought Wallace, "if there had been a little more fuss when you were younger, it would have been pleasanter living with you now, Aunt Betsey."

Poor Aunt Betsey, with many virtues, had a temper that made her a nuisance wherever she was. The Barclays alone got on tolerably with her. There was a disinfecting principle in the moral atmosphere of their house.

Two weeks had passed when Mr. Barclay heard Wallace's door open, and heard him say, "Can I speak with you one minute before dinner, sir?"

"Certainly, my son." His father entered and closed the door.

"Father," said Wallace, with a tremulous voice, but an open, cheerful face, "I feel as if I had a right now to ask you to forgive me, and take me back into the family."

Mr. Barclay felt so too, and kissing him, he said, "I have only been waiting for you, Wallace; and from the time you have taken to consider your besetting sin, I trust you have gained strength to resist it."

"It is not consideration only, sir, that I depend on; for you told me I must wait till I could give you *proof*; so I had to wait till something happened to try me. I could not possibly tell else, for I always do resolve, when I get over my passion, that I never will get angry again. Luckily for me, — for I began to be horribly tired of staying alone, — Tom Allen snatched off my new cap and threw it in the

gutter. I had a book in my hand, and I raised it to send at him; but I thought just in time, and I was so glad I had governed my passion, that I did not care about my cap, or Tom, or any thing else. 'But one swallow doesn't make a summer,' as Aunt Betsey says; so I waited till I should get angry again. It seemed as if I never should; there were provoking things happened, but somehow or other they did not provoke me, — why do you smile, father?"

"I smile with pleasure, my dear boy, to find that one fortnight's resolute watchfulness has enabled you so to curb your temper, that you are not easily provoked."

"But stay, father, you have not yet heard all. Yesterday, just as I was putting up my Arithmetic, which I had written almost to the end without a single blot, Tom Allen came along and gave my inkstand a jostle, and over it went on my open book; I thought he did it purposely, — I think so still, but I don't feel so sure. I did not reflect then, — I doubled my fist to strike him."

"O Wallace!"

"But I did not, father, I did not, — I thought just in time. There was a horrid choking feeling in my throat, and angry words seemed crowding out; but I did not even say, 'Blame

you.' I had to bite my lips, though, so that the blood ran."

"God bless you, my son."

"And the best of it all was, father, that Tom Allen, who never before seemed to care how much harm he did you, or how much he hurt your feelings, was really sorry; and this morning he brought me a new blank book nicely ruled, and offered to help me copy my sums into it; so I hope I did *him* some good as well as myself by governing my temper."

"There is no telling, Wallace, how much good may be done by a single right action, nor how much harm by a single wrong one."

"I know it, sir; I have been thinking a great deal since I have been upstairs, and I do wonder why God did not make Adam and Eve so that they could not do wrong."

"This subject has puzzled older and wiser heads than yours, my son, and puzzled them more than I think it should. If we had been created incapable of sin, there could have been no virtue. Did you not feel happier yesterday after your trial, than if it had not happened?"

"Oh, yes, father! and the strangest of all was, that, after the first flash, I had not any bad feelings towards Tom."

"Then you can see, in your own case, good resulting from being free to do good or evil.

You certainly were the better for your victory, and you say, happier. It is far better to be virtuous than sinless,—I mean, incapable of sin. If you subdue your temper, the exercise of the power to do this will give you a pleasure that you could not have had without it."

"But if I fail, father?" Wallace looked in his father's face with an expression which showed he felt that he had more than a kingdom to gain or lose.

"You cannot fail, my dear son, while you continue to feel the worth of the object for which you are striving; while you feel that the eye of God is upon you; and that, not only your own happiness, but the happiness of your father, and mother, and brothers, and sisters,—of our *home*, depends on your success."

"But, father, did you ever know anybody that had such a passionate temper, that learned to govern it always?"

"Yes, my child, but not all at once. You are placed in the happiest circumstances to obtain this rule over your own spirit. The Americans are said to be distinguished for their good temper. I believe this is true, not from any natural superiority in them to French, English, or Irish, but because they are brought up among their equals, and compelled from childhood to govern their tempers ;

one cannot encroach on the rights of another."

"But it is not so with all Americans, father."

"No; those in the Southern States unfortunately have not these restraints, — this equal pressure on all sides, and they are esteemed more irascible than the people of the North. This is one of the thousand misfortunes that result from slavery. But we must always remember, my son, that the virtue or vice produced by circumstances is not to be counted to the individual. It is the noble struggle and resistance against them, that makes virtue. It was this that constituted the merit of Washington's subjugation of his temper."

"Was he, — was General Washington passionate, father?"

"Yes; quite as irascible and passionate naturally, as you are; and yet you know it was his equanimity, his calmness, in the most irritating circumstances, that made him so superior to other men."

"Was he pious, sir?"

"He had always a strong sense of his responsibility and duty to his Creator."

"And I guess, too, he had good parents, and a pleasant home, and he hated to make them all unhappy."

"I guess he had, Wallace," replied his

father, smiling; "but I can give you another example for your encouragement. Which among the Apostles appears to you to have been the gentlest, — what we should call the sweetest tempered?"

"Oh, St. John, sir!"

"And yet he appears at one time to have been very impetuous, — what you and I call hasty tempered. He was for calling down fire on the offenders' heads. So you see that even a grown-up person, if he has the love of Christ in him, and lays his precepts to heart, so that he will really strive to be perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect, may, at any age, subdue his temper; though the work is far easier if he begins when a child, as you have, in earnest, my dear boy. You have manifested a virtuous resolution; and you not only have my forgiveness, and my entire sympathy, but I trust you have the approbation of your Heavenly Father. Come, come along to your mother; take her happy kiss, and then to dinner. We have not had one right pleasant dinner since you have been upstairs."

"Stop one moment, father." Wallace lowered his voice as he modestly added, "I don't think I should have got through it alone, but every day I have prayed to God to help me."

"You have not been alone, my dear son,"

replied his father, much moved, "nor will you ever be left alone in your efforts to obey God ; for, you remember, Jesus has said, 'If a man keep my words, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.' God, my son, is present in every dictate of your conscience, in every pure affection and holy emotion of your soul."

A farmer who has seen a beautiful crop bend under the storm, and after it rise stronger and more promising than ever, can have some feeble conception of Mr. Barclay's satisfaction, while, leaving Wallace with their mother, he assembled the children in the dining-room, and recounted to them as much as he deemed proper of his conversation with their brother.

The dinner-bell sounded, and Wallace was heard running downstairs before his mother, his heels as light as his heart. The children, jumping up behind and before him, shouted out his welcome. Grandmamma wiped her eyes, and cleared her voice to say, "Dear me, Wally, how glad we all are to see you!" Even Annt Betsey looked smiling, and satisfied, and unprovokable for an hour to come.

Others may think with Aunt Betsey, that Wallace's punishment was out of proportion to his offence ; but it must be remembered, that it was not the penalty for a single offence, but

for a habit of irascibility that could not be cured without serious and repeated efforts. Mr. Barclay held whipping, and all such summary modes of punishment, on a par with such nostrums in medicine as peppermint and lavender, which suspend the manifestation of the disease, without conducing to its cure. He believed the only effectual and lasting government, — the only one that touches the springs of action, and in all circumstances controls them, — is *self-government*. It was this he labored to teach his children. The process was slow, but sure. It required judgment, and gentleness, and, above all, patience on the part of the parents; but every inch of ground gained was kept. The children might not appear so orderly as they whose parents are like drill-sergeants, and who, while their eyes are on the fogle-man, appear like little prodigies; but, deprived of external aid or restraint, the self-regulating machine shows its superiority.

CHAPTER III.

A FAMILY DINNER.

The ~~earth~~ drift, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

SHAKSPEARE.

As we have entered Mr. Barclay's dining-room, we are tempted to linger there, and permit our readers to observe the details of the dinner. The right ministration of the table is an important item in *home* education. Mr. Barclay had a just horror of hurrying through meals. He regarded them as something more than means of sustaining physical wants, — as opportunities of improvement and social happiness. Are they not so? and is there any danger of affixing an undue importance to that, which may teach, at the rate of *three lessons a day*, punctuality, order, neatness, temperance, self-denial, kindness, generosity, and hospitality? The conventional manners of high-bred people are meant to express these virtues; but alas! with them the sign often exists without the thing signified. In middling life, the form cannot exist without the spirit. The working men and working women of our country need not remain for twelve hours chained to the oar like galley-slaves; and if they will

give up a little money for what the wealth of "Rothschilds and the Barings" cannot purchase, *time*, and devote that time to such a ministration of their meals, as shall secure "Earth's best angel, health," as a guest at the family board,—as shall develop the mind by conversation, and cultivate refined manners,—they will find the amount of good resulting to the home circle incalculable.

Alice and Mary Barclay took their "weeks about," as they called it, to arrange and wait on the table. The table was set with scrupulous neatness. "Mother sees every thing," was their maxim; and sure she was to see it, if the salt was not freshly stamped, the castors in order, and every napkin, glass, spoon, knife, and dish put on, as the girls said, by plummet and line. These are trifles in detail, but their effect on the comfort and habits of a large family of children can scarcely be magnified. Few tables in the land were more frugal than the Barclays', and few better served. They did not, however, sacrifice the greater to the less, and there were occasions when their customary forms gave place to higher matters.

"Here is our dinner," said Mr. Barclay, turning his eye that had been riveted on the happy, noisy children, to the table where Martha (still the only domestic) was placing the last dish.

"The dinner here, and I have not changed my cap!" said Mrs. Barclay.

"And I have not brushed my hair!" — "Nor I," — "Nor I," exclaimed, in a breath, half a dozen treble voices.

"It's all my fault, — forgetting to ring the warning bell," said Martha, turning her eye from Wallace to his mother, in explanation of her lapse of memory.

"Never mind, Martha. Better to forget rules for once, than forget your part in the family joy."

"That's good, mother! let us break all rules to-day, — let Wally sit by me."

"Oh, no, mother! by me! by me!" exclaimed other voices.

"No. Take your usual place, Wallace, by Haddy."

"Oh, where is dear little Haddy?" asked Wallace, and was answered by her bouncing into the room. She had been left upstairs to finish a task. She took her seat beside Wallace. There was some whispering between them, and it was plain by her glad eye and her putting her chubby arm around her brother and hugging him close to her, that pussy and the kite were drowned in Lethe.

"I guess, Miss Haddy," said Aunt Betsey, "you got some help about your task."

"Aunt Betsey!" replied the little girl, with a quivering lip, "indeed I did not, — *that would be doing a lie.*" How forcibly the "oracles of nature" come from the unperturbed mind of a child! She who made this reply was but four years old.

The blessing was asked, a usage observed at Mr. Barclay's table. Whatever objection may be urged against it from its abuse, he considered the example of the Saviour a definitive precedent for him. His distinct and touching manner of acknowledging the bounties of Providence fixed the attention. It was feeling, not form.

"You have forgotten the napkins to-day, Alice," said her mother.

Alice smiled, and replied in a low voice, "It was Wallace's fault; just as I was going for them I heard him call father, and I forgot them."

It was Alice's turn to serve the table, — a task always assigned to one, in order to avoid the confusion of the alternate jumping up and down of half a dozen little bodies, the dropping of knives and forks, the oversetting of glasses, and the din and clatter of a disorderly table.

"There is a nice crust for you, Wallace," said Alice, as she passed round the bread; "you love crust."

"Aunt Betsey," called out little Haddy, who unluckily observed her aunt trespassing against one of the ordinances of the table, "it is not proper not to use the butter-knife."

"Hush, Haddy," breathed her brother, but not in time. The antagonist principle was strong in Aunt Betsey's mind. She cherished with equal fervor dislikes and partialities; and poor little Haddy was no favorite.

"I wonder which is worst," she replied, "to use my own knife as I was brought up to, or for a little saucebox like you to set me right."

Willie, Aunt Betsey's pet, dropped his spoon, put up his lips, and kissed the angry spot away.

"I guess, Alice," said Mary, "you mean to brush Wally's place clean enough." Alice smiled. She had unconsciously bestowed double pains in brushing away her brother's crumbs. How naturally affection makes the most ordinary services its medium!

"O Mary!" said Mrs. Barclay, "I forgot when I gave you the pudding, that you complained of a headache this morning."

"It is gone now, mother."

"It may come back, my dear."

Mary put down her spoon, and gently pushed away her plate, saying, without the slightest shade of dissatisfaction, "It looks very good."

Alice placed a dish of strawberries on the

table, — the first of the season, — saying, as she did so “Rather a scant pattern, mother.”

“Yes, barely a taste for each.”

“Give mine to Wally, then,” said Mary.

“And mine too, — and mine too,” echoed and re-echoed from both sides the table.

“And mine too!” repeated little Willie, the urchin next his mother, who had been contentedly eating his potato without asking for, or even looking at, the more inviting food on the table.

The children laughed at his *parrottry*, and Alice, kissing his head as she passed, said, “Thank you for nothing, Willie.”

“Why for nothing? why not thank him as well as the rest?” asked Aunt Betsey.

“Because I suppose mother won’t give him any strawberries.”

“Why, Anne, you are not going to be so ridiculous as not to give him strawberries! You may as well starve him to death at once and done with it. There is nothing in the world so wholesome as strawberries.”

“No fruit is wholesome for him just now,” said Mrs. Barclay; and she continued to dispense the strawberries, without manifesting the slightest irritation at her sister’s interference. She had often explained to her the reason of the very strict regimen of her younger chil-

dren ; but Aunt Betsey was one of those who forget the reason, and feel the fact.

As the Barclays had no nursery maid, they were obliged to bring their children to the table, when, with ordinary habits, they would have been nuisances. To prevent this, as well as early to implant self-denial, they were not tantalized with "a very little of this," and "just a taste of that." They saw delicacies come on and go off without snatching, reaching, asking for them, or even craving them. Many a time has a guest, on seeing the youngling of the flock eating his potatoes or dry bread, remonstrated like Aunt Betsey on the superfluous hardship. But the Barclays knew it was not so. The monster appetite was thus early tamed. Its pleasures were felt to be inferior pleasures, — to be enjoyed socially and gratefully, but forbearingly. The children were spared the visitations that proceed from overloaded stomachs. They rarely had occasion for a physician. "How lucky Mrs. Barclay is with her children!" would her wondering neighbors exclaim, "they never have any sudden attacks, never any fevers, and when half the children in the city are dying with measles and hooping-cough, these horrible diseases pass lightly over them ; what can it be ?"

This is no fiction, but truth (though feebly set down) from life.

We left Mrs. Barclay distributing the strawberries. The front door opened. "There comes Harry Norton, just in time for some strawberries," exclaimed Alice. "Oh, dear, no! it's Mr. Anthon; it won't be quite so pleasant to give them up to him."

Charles rose to vacate his seat, saying, "Give him my share, mother."

"Oh, no! mine," said Alice.

"He shall have both. Thank you, my children; one would be hardly enough to offer him."

Charles and Alice retired to a window, while Mr. Anthon seated himself in the vacated chair, and fell to devouring the berries. "Bless my heart," he exclaimed after he had finished them, "I believe you have given me your place, children, and your strawberries too; and you look just as contented as if you had eaten them yourselves. It's lucky it was not my young ones, — the house would not have held them. There's a great difference in children; yours, Barclay, seem gentlemen and ladies, ready made to your hand." Mr. Barclay well knew they were not "ready made" but he abstained from disturbing the self-complacent belief that all differences were made by nature. "Speaking of gentlemen and ladies," resumed Mr. Anthon, "I called to consult you about the propriety

of people of our condition sending their children to a dancing-school. Wife is for their going, but women folks, — your pardon, ma'am," (to Mrs. Barclay), "are always for outside show; so I told her I would not say yes or no, till I had heard the pros and cons from you. The first thing to be settled is, whether dancing is desirable."

"Do you mean, whether we desire it, Mr. Anthon? I guess we do!"

"I dare say, miss, but that is nothing to the purpose."

"I beg your pardon, my friend, that is very much to the purpose. If the children relish dancing, it is an argument in its favor. Youth must have amusement. Active amusements are best. If we lived in the country, where our children could have free exercise in the open air, dancing would be unimportant; but while they are condemned to the unnatural life of a city, we should supply them with every artificial means of developing and improving their persons. I hope never to see my girls dance to display fine dancing, — this would mortify me; nor would I have them waste their time and health in dancing in crowded rooms, at unseasonable hours: but when you and I, Anthon, and a half a dozen friends are talking over news and politics, and what not, it is enliven-

ing to our children to dance away for an hour or two after the piano or the flute, or whatever instrument they may happen to have."

"Good lack! do you mean your children shall learn music too?"

"If they fancy it. Alice already plays tolerably, and Charles plays a very good accompaniment on the flute. I wish them to learn whatever will increase the attractions of their home, and tend to raise them above coarse pleasures."

"Oh! this is all very well for rich people."

"But far more important for us, Anthon. Dancing, certainly; as I think, there is nothing that conduces more to ease and grace, than learning to dance, — learning *to make legs*, as Locke says."

"What a funny expression!" exclaimed Mary, who, as well as the rest, was an attentive listener to the conversation.

"Yes, my dear, odd enough; but Mr. Locke probably meant learning to use them gracefully. The legs and arms of boys who are never taught to dance, are apt to be in their own and every one's else way. I do not wish my boys to suffer as I have from blundering into a room, and feeling when I had to bow to half a dozen gentlemen and ladies, as if I had to run a muck. I said, I consider dancing far more important

to our children than to what are called fashionable people, and for the reason that *they* have other opportunities of cultivating graceful and easy manners."

"They have more occasion for them."

"I am not sure of that. We do not yet realize that we live in a new state of things, and that the equality, which is the basis of our institutions, should also, as far as possible, be the basis of education. There is no sort of inferiority about which young people suffer more than that of manners. There are other things certainly far more important, but this is for ever before their eyes, pressing on their observation,—is seen and felt at every turn. The morals of manners we try to teach our children at home; arbitrary rules and external graces they must take the usual means of acquiring."

"Well, you certainly are odd, Barclay."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I suppose I may speak out, for neither you nor your wife are touchy."

"Yes, pray speak out, my friend; my wife and I both approve the speaking-out principle."

Mr. Anthon fidgeted on his chair. He felt a good-natured reluctance to criticising his friend, and perhaps a secret consciousness that it was bold in him to do so. After a little

hesitation he sheltered himself under that broad, common, and cowardly shield "they say," and proceeded: "They say, Barclay, that you are very inconsistent; that your family is the plainest dressed family for people of your property, that enter the church doors; that your furniture, — now I don't mean to be impertinent; I know that every thing is as neat and as comfortable here as can be; — but they say you might afford to have things a little smarter, — more like other folks, who don't think of sending their children to expensive schools, and to this and that and the other; three of them, I heard a person say, attended Griscom's course of lectures on natural philosophy, with you and your wife. That of itself runs up to a sum that would buy some pretty articles."

"It does so, Anthon, and therefore I cannot buy 'pretty articles.' I am a prosperous man in my business, but my income is limited, and I must select those objects of expenditure that appear to me wisest. Now I had rather Alice should learn to draw, than that she should wear the prettiest ear-rings in New York, or any *hardware* of that description. I would rather my boys should learn from Professor Griscom something of the nature and riches of the world they live in, than to have

a mirror the whole length of my mantel-piece. No, Anthon, I can spare money elsewhere. but, till I am compelled, I'll not spare it in the education of my children."

"Well, I never thought you was such an ambitious man."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, that you are calculating to make all your children gentlemen and ladies."

"May I ask you what you mean by my making them gentlemen and ladies?"

"It is plain enough what I mean, — lawyers, doctors, and ministers, and wives for such gentle-folks."

"I shall be governed by circumstances; I do not intend nor wish, Anthon, to crowd my boys into the learned professions. If any among them have a particular talent or taste for them, they may follow them. They must decide for themselves in a matter more important to them than to any one else. But my boys know that I should be mortified if they selected these professions, from the vulgar notion that they were more genteel, — a vulgar word that, that ought to be banished from an American's vocabulary, — more genteel than agriculture and the mechanic arts. I have labored to convince my boys, that there is nothing vulgar in the mechanic professions, — no particular rea-

son for envying the lawyer or the doctor. They, as much as the farmer and the mechanic, are working men. And I should like to know what there is particularly elevating in sitting over a table and writing prescribed forms, or in inquiring into the particulars of diseases, and doling out physic for them. It is certainly a false notion in a democratic republic, that a lawyer has any higher claim to respectability, — gentility, if you please, — than a tanner, a goldsmith, a printer, or a builder. It is the fault of the mechanic, if he takes a place not assigned to him by the government and institutions of his country. He is of the *lower orders*, only when he is self-degraded by the ignorance and coarse manners which are associated with manual labor in countries where society is divided into *castes*, and have therefore come to be considered inseparable from it. Rely upon it, it is not so. The old barriers are down. The time has come when ‘being mechanical’ we may appear on ‘laboring days’ as well as holidays, without the ‘sign of our profession.’ Talent and worth are the only eternal grounds of distinction. To these the Almighty has affixed his everlasting patent of nobility, and these it is which make the bright, ‘the immortal names,’ to which our children may aspire, as well as others. It will be our

own fault, Anthon, if, in our land, society as well as government is not organized upon a new foundation. But we must secure, by our own efforts, the elevations that are now accessible to all. There is nothing that tends more to the separation into classes than difference of manners. This is a badge that all can see. I cannot blame a gentleman for not asking a clown to his table, who will spit over his carpet, and mortify himself and annoy everybody else with his awkwardness."

Mr. Anthon's head was rather oppressed by the matter for reflection that Barclay had put into it. After a thoughtful pause he said, "Well, seeing is believing."

"Yes, and I fear it will be some time yet before this new form of society which I anticipate, will be seen; before men will seek to consort with men because they are intelligent, accomplished, and exemplary, and not because they live in fine houses, associate with *genteel* people, get masses of fashionable persons together to pass evenings in inanity, and exhaust their resources in extravagant and poisonous eating and drinking. Let me tell you, Anthon, there is too much struggling after all this; too much envy; too much imitation of it among those who are called, and still call themselves the middling classes,—my poor old friend

Norton, for instance. But I see tokens of better times."

"Of your millennium, I suppose, when farmers and mechanics are to range with the highest in the land?"

"Yes, and I can point you to some heralds of this millennium. There is in this city —, whom we both know, strictly a working man. Did he not make a speech at a political meeting the other night, that would have done honor to any professional man in the state, not only full of good common sense, but expressed in choice language, and with enough of historical allusion to show that he was a well-read man? His manner too was easy and unembarrassed; such as becomes a man addressing his equals. I know a young man in Greenbrook, my native place, also a working man, a laborious and successful farmer, whose general attainments and *manners* qualify him for polished society; who has some acquaintance with science, draws beautifully, and writes graceful verses."

"Do you mean that such a man as that in fact works?"

"Yes, digs, plants, sows, and reaps; and is contented to do so. His home is one of the most attractive and happy I have ever seen."

Mr. Anthon shook his head. "There may

be two such men in the nation, but eagles do not fly in flocks. Your doctrine is quite captivating to you and me, who do not stand on the top rung of the ladder, but it's quite contrary to the nature of things. 'One star differeth from another star in glory,' and there are angels and archangels in heaven."

"Yes, undoubtedly there must be angels and archangels. But what is it that constitutes their distinction? Knowledge and goodness; — these make degrees in heaven, and they must be the graduating scale of a true democracy. I believe that the Christian law (of course seconding the law of nature) ordains equality, — democracy if you please, — and therefore that its progress and final stability are certain. The ladder is knocked down, my friend, and we stand on nature's level."

"That's what I call a pretty up and down level. You can't even off everybody. Now just look at the difference between your children and mine. Here are yours listening to our talk, and taking pleasure in it. Bless your heart, man, mine would have been out at the doors and windows before this time."

It would have been a delicate matter for Mr. Barclay to have admitted this difference, even if he had imputed it to the true cause, his habit of always associating with his children, and of

making conversation, which he considered one of the most effective means of education, attractive and instructive to them. "We cannot," he said, "judge of the merits of a subject which we make personal. I am sorry we have come to this point, for I should like, right well, to make a convert of you. I shall comfort myself, as other people do, with the faith that my doctrine will prevail. It certainly will, if we *make* the equality, instead of merely claiming it."

"Ah, there's the rub; how the deuce are we to make it?"

"By the careful use of all the means we possess to train these young creatures; by giving them sound minds in sound bodies; by making them feel the dignity of well-informed minds, pure hearts, and refined manners. And for this we need not college education and foreign masters. Home is the best school,—the parent the best teacher. It is the opinion of some wise people, that the habits are fixed at twelve."

"The Lord have mercy on my children, then," interrupted Mr. Anthon.

"It is not my opinion," resumed Mr. Barclay; "but I do think that what is done after that is hard work both for parents and children. However, as our children are, for the most part, at home till the age of twelve, we see how


much we have in our power, and how wisely Providence has confided the most important period of life to the care of the parent, by far the most interested teacher."

"Well, well," said Mr. Anthon, who had too much reason for feeling uncomfortably under these remarks, "it can't be expected of a business man to do much with what you call home education. The wife must see to that. My wife is a good soul, but she has not got Mrs. Barclay's knack. Come, is it not time for you to go to your office?"

"Yes, past my usual time, by a half-hour. I always allow myself an hour with my family at dinner."

"An hour! bless my heart! We get through at our house in about ten minutes, — never exceed fifteen. My father made it a rule to choose the quickest eaters for his workmen. If they did not bolt in ten minutes, he concluded they were lazy or shiftless."

"Your father's bolting system would not suit me. I cannot judge for others, but I know that I am more diligent and active in business for having such an object ahead as a happy hour at home (an hour I must say, in praise of my good wife, never abridged by a want of punctuality on her part); and I return to my office with more strength and spirits, for the



HOME.

little rest I give myself after I have swallowed my food. This is my experience, and it should be so according to the best medical theories."

"Oh, dear!" said Mr. Anthon, with something between a sigh and a groan, "I wish I had thought of all these matters when I was a younger man; but it's too late now."

We would humbly recommend it to those for whom it is not too late, to think of "these matters."



CHAPTER IV.

THE REVERSE OF THE PICTURE.

'For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more
than I?'

WE shift the scene to Mr. Anthon's dinner-table. Enter Mr. Anthon, shouting to a little girl, who was scampering through the entry; "Laury, call the folks to dinner."

Laura screamed at the top of her voice, "Mother, father has come to dinner. John, — Tom, — Anne, — Julia, — Dick, — where are you all? Dinner is ready."

"Sure to be away at dinner-time," said the father, "if they are under your feet all the rest of the day."

Tom and John, and they only, responded to the muster-call, and, both entering the dining-room, seized the same chair. "It's my chair," cried Tom.

"No, it an't," says John; "I got it first."

"Be done disputing, boys," interposed the father; "is not there more than one chair in the room? Take another, Tom."

"It an't half fair," muttered Tom, obeying, however.

"Laury," said the mother, entering in the act of smoothing her hair with a side-comb, "you an't surely going to sit down to dinner in your new frock, without an apron."

"I can't find my apron, mother."

"Look in the entry."

"I have looked there."

"Look in the bedroom."

"I have looked all over the bedroom."

"Well, then, look in the pantry; hunt till you find it."

By this time the fumes of dinner had reached the olfactories of Anne and Julia, and they came racing downstairs, and entered, slamming the door after them.

"Leave open that door," said the father;

"you always shut the doors in June, and leave them open in January."

"Mother, shan't John give me my place?" asked Anne, too intent on her invaded rights to listen to her father.

"It an't her place, mother; I sat here yesterday."

"But I sat here the day before."

"What consequence is it what place you have? Crowd in your chair there, next to John. We shall be through dinner, before you all get seated. Why don't you open the door, as I told you, Anne?"

"Julia came in last, sir."

"I told *you* to open it."

"I did not know you meant me more than Julia."

"If you don't hear and mind too, next time, you shall go without your dinner."

This threat made little impression on Anne, for she was occupied in forcing her chair in between her brothers, who were seated askew, or rather, as the French would say, *en échelon*. A natural consequence ensued; John's glass of cider was jostled out of his hand, and Tom's shin was pretty roughly hit (if one might judge from his outcries) by the leg of the chair. "All that cider over my clean cloth!" exclaimed the unhappy mother. "What are you crying for, Anne?"

"Tom struck me."

"I don't care if I did, she 'most murdered me."

"Laury, just hand me a piece of bread, too," said John to his sister, who had risen at her father's request, to give him the bread.

"You may help yourself, Mr. John."

"Mother, can't Laury hand me the bread?"

"How can you be so disobliging, Laury? hand him the bread."

Laura, without budging an inch, stretched out her arm to its utmost length; John snatched at the bread-tray, and between them it went to the floor.

"Oh!" cried the mother, "you are the worst acting children I ever saw. Sit down in your places, both of you. Julia, do you get up, and pick up the bread."

While Julia obeyed, Tom screamed out, "Mother, shan't Anne use the salt-spoon? She puts her fingers in the salt-cellar."

"Well, Tom put in his knife, mother, all drizzling with gravy; see here!" and she pointed to the salt-cellar, which afforded demonstration of the truth of her charge.

Before this controversy could be settled, Dick enters, his face daubed with ink from ear to ear. The children shouted, his mother bade him go and wash, and his father ordered

him to sit down as he was and eat his dinner, saying, "He would be just as dirty afterwards, and he might wash then, and kill two birds with one stone." Dick eagerly obeyed, for he saw a pudding in perspective, and he gulped down his unchewed food, to be in readiness for it, in his haste upsetting a mustard-pot on one side, and making a trail of gravy from the gravy-boat to his plate on the other.

Two of the girls briskly cleared the table, piling the plates together and dropping the knives and forks all the way from parlor to kitchen; while the other children impatiently awaited the process, one thrumming on the table, another rocking back on the hind legs of his chair; one picking his teeth with a dropped fork, and another moulding the crumbs of bread into balls, and all in turn chidden by the much-enduring mother. Finally appeared a huge blackberry pudding hailed by smacking lips, and set down amid the still standing paraphernalia of the first course, and the wreck of mustard, cider, &c. A mammoth bit was scarcely passed to the father, when Laura cried out, "Help me first to-day, mother; 'cause Anne was helped first yesterday."

"I don't think you had best eat any to-day, Laury; you know you had a burning fever all night."

"O mother! I know blackberry pudding won't hurt me."

"Stop whining, Laury," interrupted the father. "Do give her a bit, my dear; I never heard of blackberry pudding hurting anybody."

A cry was heard from the adjoining bedroom. "The baby has waked," said the mother; "take her up, Julia, and hand her here." The baby, a poor, pale, teething thing, of a year old, but, like all babies in large families, an object of general fondness, was brought in. One fed her with pudding, another gave her a crumb of cheese, and a taste of cider. The mother ordered back a mutton-chop bone for her to suck; the father poured into her little blue lips the last drop of his bumper of wine, and then calling out, "Start your teams, boys," he sallied forth, the fifteen minutes, the longest allowed space for dinner, having been completely used up.

It would not be wonderful if John, Tom, and Dick, afterwards, as members of Congress, or, perchance, as higher officers, should elicit the strictures of foreign observers of our manners, and call down a sentence of inevitable and hopeless vulgarity upon democratic institutions. This might be borne; for, however much delicacy and refinement of manners may

embellish life, it might be difficult to prove them essential to its most substantial objects. But would there not be some danger, that young persons, bred in such utter disregard of what the French call *les petites morales* (the lesser morals), would prove, as men and women, sadly deficient in the social virtues?

The Barclays might, when grown up, chance to pour an egg into a glass, instead of taking it from the shell, or they might convey their food to their mouths with a knife instead of a fork; for these matters are merely conventional, and they might live and die in ignorance of them. But they would never dispense with the use of a tooth-brush, — never pick their teeth at table, sit on two legs of a chair, hawk (we have come to delicate ground), spit on the carpet or grate, or, in any other of the usual modes, betray the coarseness of early associations. They would not be among those who should elicit from foreigners such graphic descriptions as the following: "If you pass coffee-houses, taverns, or such like places, the street is full of chairs on which loll human bodies, while the legs belonging to them are supported against the wall or the pillars that support the awning. At such places the tobacco juice is squirted about like a fire of rockets."

But this, after all, is but the mint and

cummin. They would not be found wanting in the weightier matters, — in the gentle courtesies of the social man, — in that politeness which comes from the heart, like rays from the sun, — nor in the very soul of good-breeding, Christian grace and gentleness.

He who should embody and manifest the virtues taught in Christ's sermon on the Mount, would, though he had never seen a drawing-room, nor ever heard of the artificial usages of society, commend himself to all nations, the most refined as well as the most simple.



CHAPTER V.

A DEDICATION SERVICE.

Ye little flock, with pleasure hear ;

Ye children, seek his face ;

And fly with transports to receive

The blessings of his grace.

DODDRIDGE.

THANKS to the smiles of Heaven on our wide-spread land, the dissocial principles of the political economist of the old world do

not apply here, and a large family of children is the blessing to an American which it was to a patriarchal father. The Barclays had now been married fourteen years, and their seventh child was six weeks old. The manner in which a new-born child is welcomed into the family group, shows, in a most touching aspect, the beauty and worth of the affections which spring from the family compact. The Sunday morning had come, when the baby (of course there was always a baby in the family) was to be *carried out* to be christened. If there is a sanctifying influence from the simple ordinances of our religion, they should not be omitted or carelessly performed. In the institution of these external rites, a wise reference seems to have been made to the mixed nature of man, partly spiritual and partly corporeal. Those are over-bold who would separate what God has joined together.

Mrs. Barclay came from her room with the baby in her arms, in its christening-dress; the children gathering round her, and exclaiming, "Oh, how sweet she looks!" "O mother, do let me kiss her!" "I won't tumble her cap, — just let me kiss the tips of her fingers." "See her, see her smile!" "How pretty she breathes!" "What a cunning little fist she makes!" Is not she a beauty, mother?"

They assembled in the parlor for a sort of private dedication service. "Now," said Mr. Barclay, looking at the little group about the baby with delight, "all take one kiss, and then go to your seats. But where is Grandmamma?" The good old lady, dressed in her Sunday-best, and with spectacles and handkerchief in hand, answered the inquiry by entering and taking her seat in the rocking-chair.

"Now, father, tell us the secret," said Mary; "what have you decided to name her?"

"Oh! say Emily Norton," cried Wallace.

"Oh! I hope you will not name her Emily Norton, sir," said Alice.

"Why not, Alice?" asked Charles; "I am sure Emily Norton is a sweet name."

Alice well knew the *why not* existing in her mind, but there was no time to explain.

"Please call her Hepsy Anne," asked one of the little ones, naming a favorite schoolmate.

"I speak to have it Aunt Betsey," said Aunt Betsey's pet.

Mr. Barclay shook his head. "Mother says she must be named for Grandmamma."

"Ganmamma!" cried little Willie, "what a funny name!"

"Euphemia is Grandmamma's name my dear." The children looked grave. Euphemia sounded very strange and old-fashioned to

their ears. "Or Effie," added Mr. Barclay, if you like that better."

Effie, that prettiest of diminutives, gained all suffrages. Grandmamma, who had one of the tenderest as well as kindest hearts in the world, looked, but could not speak, her pleasure. There is something that addresses itself to the passion for immortality, in the transmission of that which is even so extraneous as a name, to one, who in the order of nature will survive us. But it was not this that brought the tears to old Mrs. Barclay's eyes. The name recalled long silent voices, which, in far-gone years, had rung it in her ears in tones of happiness and love. She said nothing, but took the baby in her arms and pressed it to her bosom. It was a pretty picture of infancy and age. As she replaced the infant in its mother's arms, "How kind it was of you," she said, "to give her my name! I thought everybody had forgotten it."

Children are most easily impressed through the medium of their senses, and the presence of their baby sister served to enforce the simple exhortation which followed from their father. He was particularly careful, in talking to his children on religious subjects, to avoid an artificial, solemn tone. He spoke as if the subject were (as it was) cheerful, dear, and familiar to him.

On this occasion he first called the attention of his children to the physical powers which God bestows on man, — the marvellous contrivance of the eye, — the uses and blessings of all the senses, — the construction of the little hand they so fondly kissed, so impotent now, but formed to be so nice and wonderful an instrument. He made their hearts beat quicker as he showed them the benevolence and wisdom manifest in the arrangement of the little frame on which their curious eyes were fixed. He then endeavored to enable them to form some conception of what was meant by man being made in the image of God, — of the sublime intellectual and moral faculties, and when their faces beamed with a comprehension of the worth of the spirit, he spoke of the temptations and trials to which it must be exposed, — of the happiness or misery that awaited it. And the destiny of this precious little creature, they were told, was in some measure confided to them. They were to lead her by their good example, to shelter her from temptation, to feed her affections from their own loving hearts, so that this new member of their family might be one of the family of heaven.

He spoke to them of the tenderness of the Saviour in bidding little children to come to him; and of the certainty, that, if they loved

him, and kept his commandments, they would be loved by him, — of all which this beneficent Being had done to secure his lambs in the fold, and to bring back the wanderers. His simple eloquence made them realize that there was a glorious nature embodied in the little form before them, capable, if rightly developed and cherished, of becoming the disciple of Jesus, and child of God. Before he had wearied them, and while, as he saw by their moistened eyes and glowing cheeks, their hearts burned within them, he asked them to kneel with their parents and dedicate their little sister to their Heavenly Father, and ask of Him, who was more ready to give than they to ask, grace to perform their duty to her.

When, a few hours after, the rite of baptism was administered in church, the children did not look upon it as an empty or incomprehensible form, but they understood its meaning and felt its value.

How easy it is to interweave the religious with the domestic affections, and how sadly do those sin against the lights of nature, who neglect to form this natural union!

CHAPTER VI.

SUNDAY AT MR. BARCLAY'S.

"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

WE hope not to bring down the charge of Sabbath-breaking on Mr. Barclay, if we venture to inform our readers, that his mode of passing Sunday differed, in some important particulars, from that which generally obtains in the religious world. His whole family, whatever the weather might be, attended public worship in the morning. He was anxious early to inspire his children with a love of going to the house of God, and with a deep reverence for public worship, which (with one of our best uninspired teachers) he believed to be "agreeable to our nature, sanctioned by universal practice, countenanced by revealed religion, and that its tendencies are favorable to the morals and manners of mankind."

Happily his pastor was beloved by his children, and Mr. Barclay therefore had none of the frivolous pretexts and evasions of duty to contend with, which are as often the fault of the shepherd as of the flock. Mr. Barclay loved to associate in the minds of his children the word and works of God; and, after the

morning service was closed, the father or mother, or both, as their convenience served, accompanied the young troop to the Battery, the only place accessible to them where the works of God are not walled out by the works of man. There, looking out on the magnificent bay, and the islands and shores it embraces, they might feel the presence of the Deity in a temple not made with hands, they might see the fruits of his creative energy, and, with sea and land outspread before them, feel that

“When this orb of sea and land
Was moulded by his forming hand,
His smile a beam of heaven imprest
In beauty on its ample breast.”

Mr. Barclay certainly would have preferred a more retired walk. On Sunday, more than any other day, he regretted the sequestered haunts of Greenbrook, where he might have interpreted the religious language of nature without encountering observation or criticism. But he would not sacrifice the greater to the less, and he was willing to meet some curious eyes and perhaps uncharitable judgments, for the sake of cultivating in his children that deep and ineffaceable love of nature, which can only be implanted or rather cherished in childhood. He was careful in these Sunday walks

to avoid the temptations to frivolity in the way of his children, and he never encouraged remarks upon the looks, dress, and gait of those they met.

Restricted as they were by their residence to a single walk where the view of nature was unobstructed, their topics were limited; but children will bear repetition, if the teacher has a gift for varied and happy illustration. A walk on the Battery suggests many subjects to a thinking mind. A few of these would occur to a careless observer. The position of the city at the mouth of a noble navigable river, — a position held sacred by the Orientals; Long Island, with its inviting retreats for the citizen, and its ample garden grounds, seemingly designed by Providence to supply the wants of a great metropolis; Governor's Island, with its fortifications and military establishment, — a picture to illustrate the great topic of peace and war, on which a child's mind cannot be too soon, nor too religiously enlightened; the little island where the malefactor suffers his doom, an object to impress a lesson of his country's penal code; Staten Island with its hospitals and quarantine ground, to elicit¹ important instruction concerning these benevolent institutions, and their abuses in ill-governed countries; the telegraph,

the light-house, and the ship, the most striking illustration of man's intelligence, industry, skill, and courage; the lovely shaded walks of Hoboken, over which the sisters Health and Cheerfulness preside; and, finally, the Narrows, — the outlet to that path on the great deep, which the Almighty has formed to maintain the social relations and mutual dependence of his creatures.

There may be some who think that these are not strictly religious topics, nor perfectly suited to the Lord's-day. But perhaps a little reflection will convince them, that all subjects involving the great interests of mankind may be viewed in a religious light; and, if they could have listened to Mr. Barclay, as, leaning over the Battery railing, he talked to the cluster of children about him, they would have perceived that the religious light, like the sun shining on the natural world, shows every subject in its true colors and most impressive aspect.

At half-past one, the Barclays returned invigorated and animated by the fresh sea breezes, to a cold dinner prepared without encroaching on the rest of Martha's Sabbath. The dinner was only distinguished from that of other days by being rather simpler and more prolonged, for they dedicated a part of

this day, in the emphatic words of Jesus, "made for man," to social intercourse. That, to be happy, must be spontaneous and free.

"I wonder," said a lady, on one occasion, to Mrs. Barclay, "that you don't take your children to church Sunday afternoons. It is the best way of keeping them still."

Mrs. Barclay smiled; and Mary answered, "I am sure you would not think so, Mrs. Hart, if you were to see Willie; — he fidgets all the time."

"No, — no, Miss Mary," spoke up Willie, "mother says I sit very still when they sing; but I do get tired with the preaching part, — I wish they would leave that out!"

"So do I," said Mary; "I own, when I go in the afternoon I cannot help going to sleep."

"Then you never sleep in the morning, Mary?"

"O no, — never."

"I thought you never went in the afternoon."

"Sometimes," said Mrs. Barclay, "when I am not well, I send her with the little ones, as I suppose other mothers do, to get them out of the way, and into a safe place. I am sorry ever to do this, for the heart is apt to be hardened by an habitual inattention to solemn truths, — by hearing without listening to them."

"You must have a pretty long, tiresome afternoon."

"Tiresome!" exclaimed Mary, "I guess you would not think so, if you were here, Mrs. Hart. Sunday afternoon is the pleasantest of all the week. Is not it, Willie?"

"Yes, indeed, 'cause mother stays with us all the time."

"And reads to us," added Mary.

"And shows us pictures," said Willie, "and lets Patrick and Biddy come and see them too."

"They are Bible pictures, Mrs. Hart, and so mother reads something in the Bible that explains them."

"And sometimes she tells us Bible stories," said Willie; "and sometimes stories of real live children, — real, — not book children, you know."

"And sometimes," continued Mary, still eager to prove to Mrs. Hart that the Sunday afternoons were not tiresome, "mother writes a little sermon on purpose for us, not a grown-up sermon. Then she teaches us a hymn; then she teaches us to sing it; and when she wants to read to herself, she sets us all down, Willie and Biddy and all, with our slates to copy off some animal. I wish you could see Willie's, — his horses look like flying dragons."

"O Mary!" interrupted Willie; "well, you know mother said your cow's legs were broken, and her horns ram's horns."

"This is a singular occupation for Sunday," said Mrs. Hart.

Mary perceived the implied censure. "Oh, but, ma'am," she said, "you don't know what we do it for. After we have finished, mother tells us all about the animal,—how its frame is contrived for its own happiness,—how God has prepared its food, for you know the Bible says the young ravens cry unto him and he feedeth them;—and then she explains what she calls the relations between man and animals, and Pat Phealan says mother makes him feel as if the dumb creatures were his first cousins,—Pat is so droll. He says he never throws a stone at a dog now, and he can't bear to see the men cruelly whip their horses,—*'he won't, plase God he ever owns one;'* you know Pat is Irish. No, Mrs. Hart, you would not think it was wicked for us to draw pictures Sunday, if you were to hear mother teach us about them, or to see our little books of natural history, where we write down what she says."

"Wicked, my dear! I did not say it was wicked."

"No, ma'am,—but"—

"If I did think so," added Mrs. Hart, rightly

interpreting Mary's hesitation to speak, "I think so no longer. I too am learning of your dear mother, Mary. I should like to know how the rest of your family pass the Sunday afternoon. May I question Mary, Mrs. Barclay?"

"Certainly, we make no secret of our mode of passing Sunday, though we do not wish to proclaim it. We do not expect to reform the world, even if we should be satisfied with the result of our experiment. To tell you the truth, Mrs. Hart, we have long thought it would be better to have but one religious service on Sunday,—that people satisfy their consciences by just sitting down within the four walls of a church, no matter how languid their attention, how cold their hearts, when they get there,—that much most precious time is thus wasted, the only time that the great mass of the working world have to consecrate to spiritual subjects and active charities. We think clergymen would preach better and their people hear *more*, if there was but one sermon. These being our opinions, our duty is plain, and we therefore quietly follow the course conscience dictates to us, hoping to be kindly judged by those from whom we differ with all humility, and being well aware that those who depart from the received

usages of the religious world should be diffident of themselves. Do not, I beseech you, think that we underrate or distrust the value of public worship. We reverence it as one of the most important and dearest of all social institutions, and we are therefore most anxious that its effect on our children's minds should not be impaired. Now if you are not tired out with my long preface, ask Mary what questions you please; if she cannot answer them, I will."

"Thank you. Well, Mary, what do Charles, and Wallace, and Alice, Sunday afternoon?"

Mary bridled up with the conscious dignity of a witness giving testimony in a matter of high concernment. "Father says, ma'am, that as Sunday is the *Lord's day*, we ought to be faithful servants and spend it in his service; and he thinks that those who have more knowledge than others should give it to them, just as the rich give their money to the poor. So we have a little school here Sunday afternoons, ten children, sometimes more, from father's families" —

"'Father's families!' what means the child?"

"The families father takes care of, — sees to, you know, — that is he visits them, knows all about their affairs, advises the parents, and in-

structs the children, and the parents too I guess sometimes, and now and then helps them, and so on."

"And the instruction and advice," said Mrs. Barclay, "has much more effect on them than the temporal aid which Mary calls 'help, and so on.' A word goes a great way with them, from those that show an interest in their little pleasures, and who share them, as if they really felt that these poor creatures in their low condition, were their brethren and sisters, and children of the same father. It makes a great difference whether you do them a kindness to discharge your conscience of a duty that presses on it, or from an affectionate interest in them."

"This is a new view of the subject to me," said Mrs. Hart, "but I'll think on't. Well, Mary, how do the children manage the school? they are rather young for such a business."

"Oh! they don't do the managing part. Father and mother do that; and grandmamma or Martha sits in the room to see that all goes on smooth. Aunt Betsey tried it, but" —

"My dear Mary!"

"Mother, I am sure Mrs. Hart knows Aunt Betsey. Two of the children," continued Mary "teach, and one goes with father to see his families, and they take turns; and father and mother come in and talk to them."

Mrs. Barclay helped out Mary's account with some explanations: "Some of the children," she said, "are Catholics, and of course would not attend church in the afternoon. The Catholics are shy of sending their children to the public schools, but they have not manifested any reluctance to trust them to us, probably from our intimate knowledge of them at their homes, and from having realized some advantage from our instruction there; for we have done what we could to improve their domestic economy. *Home* influences, even among the poor and ignorant, are all in all for good and for evil, for weal and for woe. We have some tough subjects, as you may imagine; but patience, 'Patience and hope,' is our motto. Besides, we really get attached to them; and love, you know, lightens all labor."

"Yes, mother," said Mary; "that is just like what father read us out of Shakspeare last evening:

'I do it

With much more ease, for my good will is to it.' "

"The children," continued Mrs. Barclay, "are quite competent to hear the lessons of their classes. We spend our time in talking of whatever the occasion may suggest. Sometimes we elucidate or impress a passage of Scripture, — sometimes we strive to deepen

and fix a sentiment. As most of their parents are Irish, they are quite ignorant of the history, government, and laws of their adopted country. Mr. Barclay endeavors to enlighten them on these subjects. He tries to make them feel their privileges and duties as American citizens, and to instruct them in the happy, exalted, and improving condition of man at the present time, and in our country, compared with what it has been heretofore, or is elsewhere. I take upon myself the more humble, womanly task of directing their domestic affections, and instructing them, as well as I am able, in their every-day, home duties. We wish to make them feel the immense power and worth of their faculties, and their responsibility to God for the proper use of them."

"Truly," said Mrs. Hart, "your time is spent quite as profitably as it would be at church; but do you not get excessively wearied?"

"The weariness soon passes off."

"And the compensation remains?"

"Yes, it does; I say it not boastfully, but with thankfulness to Him who liberally rewards the humblest laborer in his field."

"And then, Mrs. Hart, our Sunday evenings are so pleasant," said Mary; "do, mother, let me tell about them."

"Very well, my dear, but remember what I told you to-day about the Pharisees."

"Oh, yes, ma'am! that there might be Pharisees nowadays as well as in old times; but I am sure it is not Pharisaical to tell Mrs. Hart how happy we all are Sunday evenings."

"I am sure it is not, Mary. Go on; what is the order of Sunday evening?"

"Oh, ma'am! there is not any order at all, — that is, I mean, we don't go by rules. I should hate that, for it would seem just like learning a lesson over, and over, and over again. We do just what we happen to fancy. Sometimes father reads to us, and sometimes mother, and sometimes we read ourselves. Sometimes we write off all that we can remember of the sermon, and sometimes we take a text and write a little sermon ourselves, — father, and mother, and all, — pretty short mine are. But the shortest of all was Willie's. You remember, mother, that which he asked you to write for him. What was it, Willie?"

"'My peoples, if you are good, you'll go to heaven; and if you an't, you won't.' You need not laugh, Mary; father said it was a *very* good sermon."

"Go on, Mary. I want to know all about these Sunday evenings."

"Well, ma'am; sometimes we write down what we did last week, what we wish we had done and what we wish we had not, and what

we mean to do next week. Sometimes we form a class, — father, mother, and all, and we ask questions, in turn, from the Bible, ‘what such a king did?’ — ‘when such a prophet lived?’ — ‘where such a river runs?’ — ‘where such a city stood?’ and so on; trying most of all to puzzle father and mother, and get them to the foot of the class. Sometimes father makes us all draw our own characters, and then he draws them for us; and — oh dear! Mrs. Hart, when we come to put them together, as Wallace said, ours looked crooked enough, and out of joint. Once father gave us for a lesson to write all we could remember of the history of our Saviour. We were not to look in the Bible. We thought it would be very easy, but it took us three Sunday nights. But the pleasantest of all, — you know what the pleasantest of all is, mother, — a story from father. Oh, I forgot about your lists, mother.”

“You have remembered quite enough, my child.”

“Enough,” said Mrs. Hart, “to make me envy your pleasant Sunday evenings *at home*, and to inspire me with the desire, as far as I can, to go and do likewise.”

CHAPTER VII.

A TRUE STORY.

"The ants are a people not strong,
Yet they prepare their meat in summer."

AMONG "father's families," as Mary had called those who were the particular subjects of her father's bounty and supervisorship, was one by the name of Phealan. John Phealan was a laborious, honest Irishman, who having lost his wife and being left with the care of three children, had recourse to the usual consolation, and, in the space of two or three months, took unto himself another help-meet, the widow O'Neil, who had worn her decent weeds for the canonical term of a year and a day. "It was quite natural it should please God to bring them together at last," John said; "though it was by the hard manes of taking Judy—bless her soul—to himself; for he and Rosy were born within a stone's throw, and saw the same sun rise and set for the first twenty years of their lives at home, in Ireland, whereas Judy was a stranger till he took her to be the mother of his children."

"It was quite natural, John," replied Mr. Barclay to this speech, which was meant as a sort of apology to his friend for a step that he

feared would not meet with Mr. Barclay's approbation; "quite natural, but our natural inclinations sometimes make us lose sight of prudence; and I am afraid the widow O'Neil's children and yours together will be more than one house will hold, as they say, John. The widow, — I beg your pardon, John, — your wife has two children of her own?"

"Two! bless your eyes, sir; yes, two and two to that, and a stray into the bargain."

"A stray? what do you mean by that?"

"I mane Biddy McClure, sir, the child of her poor mother that's gone to rest. Ellen, the mother, poor thing, died on Rosy's bed; so Rosy, with a full heart in her, as she has, could do no less than take on the baby with her own, though she was bid turn it over to the orphan asylum; — the Lord help poor Biddy! never to know a home or a mother."

"But where was her father?"

"She never had any to spake of, sir."

"I suppose now, John, you would be glad to get her into the orphan asylum."

"Plase the Lord, no, sir; it would be an ill turn to do Rosy, to cast away the chicken she's brooded under her own wing. Besides, sir, my mother, that's gone, — peace to her soul! — always said there was a blessing to the roof that sheltered an orphan child."

Mr. Barclay thought there could scarcely fail to be a blessing upon a roof that hung over such generous hearts, and for once he was persuaded out of his prepossessions against this clubbing together of families, that so commonly issues in unhappiness. He could not, however, forbear saying, "I trust, John, you will have no additions to this family."

"We lave that with the Lord; if they come they'll find a welcome."

"A large family is a heavy burden to a poor man, John."

John scratched his head, and admitted what was undeniable, but with a mouthful of blessings on the country, he said, "No honest working man in it need go to bed to dream of hungry children."

Time went on, and in due succession two more children appeared, and found the welcome John Phealan had promised. Mr. Barclay took an especial interest in seeing how far virtuous exertions and naturally happy tempers could triumph over unfavorable circumstances. He kept his eye on the family. He found Phealan ready to be guided by his advice, and Phealan's wife docile to the instructions of Mrs. Barclay; always replying to them, "I'll do my *endeavors*, madam." And so faithfully did she do them, that, contrary to

common experience, and in the teeth of political economy, this little confederation lived on prosperously and happily, like the famous family of natural haters, the dog, cat, rat, bird, snake, and squirrel, proving that there are no natural discordances or antipathies that may not be overcome by moral force. There were now and then some little clashings among the children, but they passed over as harmless as light summer showers.

But, alas! a storm did come, that threatened utter desolation. Both Phealan and his wife were carried off by an epidemic, after a week's illness. What was to be done? Of the last marriage there were two children living, one five and the younger less than a year old. Little Biddy McClure was not yet quite seven. A friend of the Phealans adopted the child of five years, but no one could be found to take the baby, and poor Biddy was too young for service. Mr. Barclay consulted with the elder children, and realized a rich harvest in the fruits of his instructions to them. They were all earning something, and were able to estimate their resources and make rational calculations for the future. They could pay their room-rent, and support the baby and Biddy; and if old Miss Jones, who had lost the use of her legs, and rented a dark little room in the

garret, would live in their room rent-free, and just look a little after Biddy nursing the baby; while they were out at their places, they could keep together yet, and need not send the baby and Biddy — a jewel was Biddy — to any orphan asylum but their own. This plan, calling forth such virtuous exertions from these young creatures, was approved by the Barclays. Never a week passed that the Phealans were not visited by one of them, and such counsel or aid given as the exigencies of these little worthies required. The family was actually kept comfortably afloat for eighteen months. Then Miss Jones took it into her head to retire to a relation's in the country, but fortunately Mary Phealan, the oldest of the family, married respectably just at this juncture, having stipulated that if the family did break up, she should take the baby for her own. The family, Mr. Barclay said, must break up; but what should be done with Biddy? Biddy was a general favorite, and the children, after a consultation, agreed that they would pay her board until she was old enough to go to service. Mr. Barclay did not quite like this plan. He thought Biddy would be living in idleness for two or three years, and forming bad habits, or no habits at all, when the foundation should be laying for future usefulness.

It may perhaps stimulate some reader's benevolence to know, that while Mr. Barclay was paying this minute attention to the concerns of the little orphan family, he was the principal manager of one of the most important printing establishments in New York.

"What is to be done with Biddy?" he asked his wife; "the little stray, as poor Phealan used to call her, must be provided for."

"Yes, she must. I have been thinking a great deal of her, and if I could only get Martha to consent, we might take her ourselves."

"My dear wife! the very plan I thought of, but I could not bear to propose any thing which should increase your cares."

"Oh! that's nothing; you know I do not mind light burdens."

"I know you make all burdens light; and I wish that your children may learn from you, that it is the light heart that makes the burden light, and not *vice versa*, as most people think."

"Thank you; that's a compliment worth having, and I will see if it will make me eloquent to Martha; but I dread the view she may take of the subject."

Mrs. Barclay had some reason for this dread. Martha had too long had her own way, — an excellent way it was, — to brook any interference with it. She was orderly to precision,

and she had always said (what she had once said poor Martha was much given to always say), that a child in the kitchen would be a terrible annoyance to her. She had before stoutly and successfully opposed a benevolent plan of Mrs. Barclay's similar to the present, Mrs. Barclay having thought it wisest to yield her own wishes to her faithful servant's. — Servant! we beg Martha's pardon, *help*. Serving most assiduously, she had an antipathy to the word *servant*. Was she not right? There must be new terms to express new relations. *Help* may have a ludicrous and perhaps an alarming sound to unaccustomed ears; but is there a word in the English language more descriptive of the service rendered by a New-England domestic; truly a "republican independent dependent," and the very best servant (this we say on the highest foreign, ay *English* authority), provided we are willing to dispense with obsequiousness and servility, for the capability and virtue of a self-regulating and self-respecting agent.

The Barclays' religion governed all their relations. They did not regard their servant as a hireling, but as a member of their family, who, from her humble position in it, was entitled to their protection and care. Martha was their friend; the family joys and sorrows were

part and parcel with hers, hers with theirs. As her qualifications increased with her years, and her labors with the growth of the family, they had augmented her wages; never taking advantage of her preference of their house to withhold a just (others might have called it a generous) consideration for her labors, and quieting their consciences by a resolution to recompense her at some convenient season,—that future indefinite, so convenient to the debtor, so hopeless to the creditor.

Mrs. Barclay was certainly a most successful grower of the virtues; but with the best moral cultivation, human infirmity is a weedy soil, and poor Martha sometimes, wearied with the unvaried routine of domestic service, became, like others, unreasonable and fretful. She was not fretted at in turn, and wondered at, as servants are (as if they alone should be exempt from human weakness), but sent to recreate herself in her native New England; whence she returned, strong and cheerful to her tasks.

But we are leaving too long unsettled the interests of our little friend Biddy.

"Martha," said Mrs. Barclay, "the Phealans are breaking up at last."

"Are they indeed, ma'am? I am sorry for it; they have been a sight to behold, that

family. I never could look at them without feelings."

"Courage!" thought Mrs. Barclay; "if Martha once has what she calls feelings, all will go right. Poor Biddy," she continued, "is looking puny; she has been too much slint up with the baby. — She is a nice, bright child."

"Yes, she is indeed, ma'am."

"I wish, Martha, she could get a good place."

"I wish she could, ma'am, but she is not fit for service yet."

"No, not exactly; I suppose hardly anybody would be willing to take the tronble of her for two or three years yet, while she is going to school."

"I suppose not, but they would be well paid for it afterwards, — such a very good child."

"That they would, Martha; but there are so few persons that are willing to take tronble now, for a possible reward hereafter."

"I know it; there's few, even of those that aim to do right, that are willing to pay the cost. You and Mr. Barclay" — Martha stopped; it was not in her line to pay direct compliments.

"Mr. Barclay and I, you think, perhaps,

might be willing to stretch out a helping hand to poor Biddy; and so we should, and would, but the trouble, Martha, would come upon you."

"O ma'am! in such a case, — for a poor little orphan like Biddy, and so good too, I should not mind the trouble."

"If you really would not, Martha, I should take her joyfully into the family. But you must consider well; you will have her constantly with you. You know you don't like a child under your feet. If she is brought up in the family, you will have to teach her; for you know I do not choose to keep any one to wait on the children. It will be a task, and a long one, Martha; but then, if you should decide to undertake it, you will have the consolation of doing a great service to a fellow creature. Think of it, Martha, and decide for yourself."

Martha took time for consideration, and then little Biddy was installed, a most happy and grateful member of the family; and Martha, who had been generously allowed to be a free agent in the good work, bore all the little trials it brought with patience, and trained Biddy with a zeal that enters only into voluntary action.

"The poorest poor
Long for some moments in a weary life,

When they can know and feel that they have been
the dealers out
Of some small blessings, — have been kind to such
As needed kindness."

CHAPTER VIII.

A DARK DAY.

"A foolish son is the calamity of his father."

THERE are seldom allotted to humanity fourteen years of such success and happiness as had been experienced by the Barclays. In this time, Mr. Barclay had secured a competency. His competency did not merit the well-known satirical definition of being a "little more than a man has," but was enough to satisfy his well regulated desires, to provide for the education of his children, and to save his daughters from the temptation of securing a home, in that most wretched of all modes, by marrying for it. It was no part of his plan to provide property for his sons. Good characters, good education, and a *start* in the world, was all they were to expect. This they perfectly understood. As soon as they were capa-

ble of comprehending them, they were made acquainted with their father's affairs, minutely informed of the condition of his property, and his plans for the future. Mr. Barclay despised that mean jealousy with which some parents hide their pecuniary affairs from their children, — some husbands from their wives even, as if they were not joint and equal proprietors in the concern.

He had now nearly reached the period when he meditated a great change in his life. From the beginning of his career in the city, he had looked forward with a yearning heart to the time when he might retire to Greenbrook. His children often visited their relatives there. It was their Jerusalem, to which the heart made all its pilgrimages. The old parsonage had recently come into market; Mr. Barclay had purchased it; and it was a fixed matter, that in the ensuing spring, as soon as the house could be repaired, the family should remove thither. In the mean time, this long hoped-for event was the constant theme of father, mother, and children. Improvements and occupations were planned by day, and at night Mr. Barclay's dreams were of that home of his childhood. Again he was wading and swimming in that prettiest of all streams that circled the meadows, slaking his thirst

from the moss-grown bucket, and making cups and saucers for little Anne Hyde from the acorns under the great oak-tree at the end of the lane.

Alas! disappointment comes to the most prudent, when least expected and often when least deserved.

It was just before Christmas, about the annual period when business is investigated and its results ascertained. Mr. Barclay had been shut up all the morning in his counting-room with his elder partner, Norton. Their accounts stood fairly, and showed a prosperous business and great increase of profits. The old man did not seem at all animated by this happy state of things. He was absent and thoughtful, and nothing roused him till Mr. Barclay said, "I do not believe you will ever regret taking my advice and putting Harry into the printing-office."

"Never, never," repeated Norton, emphatically.

"I should not be surprised," continued Mr. Barclay, "if he were in the end richer than his brother, and I am sure he will not be less happy, nor less respectable."

A half-suppressed groan escaped Norton.

"You are not well, sir?"

"No, I am not well, — I have not been well for a long time, — I never expect to be again.

"O sir! you are needlessly alarmed."

"No, no; I am not alarmed, — not alarmed about my health."

"You have worked too hard this morning. You will feel better for the fresh air: I will walk home with you."

The fresh air did not minister to the mind diseased. Norton's depression continued during the walk. He said little, and that little in broken sentences, in praise of his son Harry. "He is an honest boy, Barclay, — good principles, — good habits, — owes them all to you, — he'll be able to shift for himself, if — he's a good boy, Barclay."

When they reached Norton's fine residence in Hudson Square, his daughter Emily, a child of eleven or twelve, met them at the door, exclaiming, "O papa, the men have hung the lamps, and brought the flowers, and the rooms look beautifully!"

In her eagerness she did not at first give any heed to Mr. Barclay's presence, but when she did she nodded to him, stammered through the last half of her sentence, turned on her heel, and briskly ran through the entry and upstairs. Norton was roused, his energy was excited by what he deemed a necessary exertion, and he begged Mr. Barclay to enter, saying he had a word to say to him in private.

Mr. Barclay followed him into one of his two fine drawing-rooms; the folding doors were open, and both were furnished in a style that becomes the houses of our wealthiest merchants. The apartments were obviously in preparation for a party. The servants were going to and fro with the most bustling and important air. Norton looked round with a melancholy gaze, and then asked Mr. Barclay to follow him to a small breakfasting-room. He shut the door, and, after a little moving of the chairs and hemming, he said, "We are to have a great party this evening, Barclay."

"So I perceive, sir."

"It is a party that John's wife gives for Emily."

"Indeed!"

"It an't my fault, Barclay, nor Harry's — Heaven knows! nor can it be called Em's — poor child! these foolish notions are put in her head; but it is John's wife's fault, — and John's too, I must own, that your folks are not asked."

"My dear sir, do not give yourself a moment's uneasiness about it. It would be no kindness to my family to invite them; they know none of Mrs. John Norton's friends, and these fine parties are not at all in our way."

"It is the better for you, — it is all cursed folly, — I see it too late."

Mr. Barclay responded mentally and most heartily, "Amen," and was going away, when Norton laid his hand on his arm, saying, "Don't blame Harry; he is good and true, — he is your own boy, you've made him all he is; don't blame him."

"I assure you I blame no one, my good friend," said Mr. Barclay, and hurried home, thinking a great deal of Norton's dejection, but not again of the party, till, in the evening, Harry Norton joined his family circle as usual, and stayed till bedtime; but was not, as usual, cheerful and sociable.

The elder Norton was an uneducated man. He spent all his early life in toiling in a lean business, and accumulating, in consequence of his very frugal house-keeping, his small gains. When Mr. Barclay threw his talent into the concern, it at once became thriving; and when John Norton, whose education his ignorant father had been quite incapable of directing, was of a marriageable age, he was reputed the son of a rich man. Being ambitious of a fashionable currency, he succeeded in marrying a poor stylish girl, who immediately introduced her notions of high life into her father-in-law's house, and easily induced the weak old man to fall into her plan of setting up a genteel establishment, and living fashion-

ably ; “ weakly imitating ” (as has been pithily said) “ what is weakest abroad.” Old Norton had but three children ; two by a second marriage. Harry was in firm hands, and easily managed, but poor little Emily was removed from all her old associates, sent to a French school, and fairly inducted into a genteel circle.

The party was over, and a beautiful Christmas morning followed. Mrs. Barclay was in her nursery and Mr. Barclay still in his room, where he had already received the greetings of his children as they passed downstairs ; “ A merry Christmas, father ! ” and “ The next at Greenbrook, and oh, how merry it will be ! ”

Another and hurried tap at the door, and “ May I come in, sir ? ”

“ Yes, Harry, come in. Mercy on us ! what is the matter, my boy ? ”

Harry Norton was pale and breathless ; he burst into tears, and almost choking, exclaimed, “ John has killed himself ! ”

“ Your brother ! — John ! — God forbid ! ”

“ Indeed he has, sir, and that is not the worst of it.”

“ What can there be worse ? ”

“ O Mr. Barclay ! ” replied the poor lad, covering his burning cheeks with both hands, “ I cannot bear to tell.”

What Harry in a broken voice, and tears poured out like rain for the shame of another, told, was briefly as follows. John, without education for business and without any capital of his own, had engaged largely in mercantile concerns, and had plunged deeply into that species of gaming called *speculation*. His affairs took a disastrous turn, and after his credit was exhausted, his paper was accepted by virtue of the indorsement of Norton and Co., which he obtained from his weak father without the concurrence or knowledge of Mr. Barclay. A crisis came. The old man refused any farther assistance. John committed a fraud, and, when soon after he perceived that detection and ruin were inevitable, he resolved on self-murder. He spent an hour or two at his wife's Christmas-eve party, talked and laughed louder than anybody else, drank immeasurably of champagne, and retired to the City Hotel to finish the tragedy by the last horrid act. Thus, poor wretch, did he shrink from the eye of man, to rush into His presence, with whom the great account of an outraged nature and a misspent life was to be settled.

His family were roused from their beds to hear the horrible news. The old man's health had long been undermined in consequence of

his anxiety about his son's affairs, and the reproaches of his conscience for the secret wrong he had done his partner. The shock was too much for him. It brought on nervous convulsions. At the first interval of reason he sent for Mr. Barclay. Mr. Barclay hastened to him with poor Harry, who looked more like the guilty, than like the innocent victim of the guilt of another.

Reflections swarmed in Mr. Barclay's mind, as he passed to the dying man's room through the luxurious apartments where pleasure, so called, had, through the demands of waste and extravagance, led to the fatal issue. Some of the lamps were still burning, or smoking in their sockets. He passed the open door of the supper-room. There still stood the relics of the feast, — fragments of perigord pies, drooping flowers, broken pyramids, and piles — literally piles — of empty champagne bottles; an enormous whiskey-punch bowl, drained to the last drop, stood in a niche in the entry.* The door of Mrs. Norton's apartment was open, — she in hysterics on the sofa, her attendants running in and out,

* The writer was told by a lady, that, after a party at her house where one of these mammoth punch-bowls had been nearly emptied, she offered a glass of the beverage to a servant. "No, I thank you, madam," he replied, "I belong to the Temperance Society." What a satire!

their minds divided between the curiosity ever awake on such occasions and the wants of the weak sufferer. When at last Mr. Barclay reached the old man's apartment in the third story, he found him bolstered up in his bed, breathing painfully. When he saw Mr. Barclay enter, followed by Harry, a slight shivering passed over his frame. He stretched out his arm and closed his eyes; Mr. Barclay took his hand. Norton felt that there was no longer time for delay or concealment. He attempted to speak, but his organs were now weaker than his mind. After several futile efforts, his quivering lips uttered the words, "I have — much to tell you, — John — I — John, — oh, I cannot!"

"You need not, sir; Harry has told me."

Norton turned his eager eye to his son. The blood that seemed to be congealed at his heart, once more flushed to his cheek. "*All*, Harry?" he asked in a husky voice.

"Yes, sir; Mr. Barclay knows all that we know."

Norton's eye again explored Mr. Barclay's face. No reproach was there, — not even a struggling and repressed displeasure, — nothing but forgiveness and pity. The poor man understood it, and felt it to his heart's core. He was past tears, but the veins of his fore-

head swelled, his features were convulsed, and he said in a broken voice, "Oh, how kind! but I can't forgive myself; — poor John! — he's past it! I'm going, and I can't — I can't even ask God to — forgive me."

"My dear friend! do not say so, — God is infinitely more merciful than any of his creatures. He pitieth us, even as a father pitieth his children."

These words seemed to the poor man's spirit like water to parched lips. He looked at his son, and then at his little daughter, Emily, who was kneeling behind the bed with her face buried in the bed-clothes, and he realized in the gushing tenderness of his own parental feelings the full worth of that benignant assurance which has raised up so many desponding hearts. "Can you — will you pray for me?" he asked.

"Most certainly I will."

"But now, I mean, — aloud, so that I can hear you."

Mr. Barclay knelt at the bedside. Harry threw himself down by his sister, and put his arm around her. Her moanings ceased while their friend, in a low, calm voice, uttered his petitions for their dying father. It was no time for disguise or false coloring of any sort. Mr. Norton had lived, as many live, believing

in the Bible and professing faith in Christ, but making a very imperfect and insufficient application of the precepts of Christianity to his life. In the main, he was a moral, kind-hearted, and well-intentioned man; but, misled by a silly ambition and an overweening fondness for a favorite son, he had destroyed him, deprived his younger children of their rights, and defrauded his best friend.

Mr. Barclay, in the name of the dying man, expressed his contrition for the evil he had done, and suffered to be done; — for the barrenness of his life compared to the fruits it should have produced. He acknowledged the equity of that law which deprived him of the peace of the righteous in his death. And then, even with tears, he besought the compassion that faileth not, the mercy promised by Jesus Christ and manifested to many who had backslidden and sinned grievously, but who, like the prodigal son, had returned and been received with outstretched arms. In conclusion, he alluded to himself. He fervently thanked God, that when he had come from the home of his fathers, a stranger to a strange city, he had been received, befriended, and generously aided by his departing servant; and he finished with a supplication that he might be heartily disposed, and enabled, to

return to the children the favors received from the father.

Silence prevailed long after he ceased to speak. Harry and Emily were locked in one another's arms. Mr. Norton continued in fervent prayer. His eyes were raised and his hands folded. His spirit was at the foot of the cross, seeking peace in the forgiveness and infinite compassion there most manifest. When the old man's mental prayer was finished, there was comparatively peace on his countenance; but the spirit that struggles back over those self-erected barriers that have separated it from God, cannot have, — must not expect, — the tranquillity, the celestial joy, that is manifested in the death of those who have been faithful in life.

Mr. Norton murmured his thoughts in half-formed sentences: "He is merciful; — 'Come unto me' — I *am* heavy laden. — Harry is very good! — oh — oh, how good you are to me! — Poor Emy, — she won't have to go to the almshouse, — will she?"

Mr. Barclay turned his eye to the poor child, and for the first time noticed her dress. She had been wearied out with the party of the previous evening, and had fallen asleep without undressing; and now her ornamented pink silk frock, her rich necklace and ear-rings

were a painful comment on her father's words "Such a dress on a poor child who has no certain refuge but the alms-house!" thought Mr. Barclay. He felt the deepest pity for her, but he was too honest to authorize false hopes. "No," he said in reply to Mr. Norton, "Emily shall not go to the alms-house, — she shall not be a dependent on any charity, public or private, if she is true to herself. I will see that she is qualified to earn her own living."

"Oh, that is best, far best, — you'll see to her, — that's enough, — and poor Harry too?"

"Harry already earns his living. I will be his guardian. Shall I, Harry?"

"You always have been, sir," replied Harry, grasping his hand.

"Yes, yes, — he has; — God reward him, — he, not I."

"Oh, father, I did not mean that, — indeed I did not."

"Truth don't hurt me now," said the old man; "it's truth." And so it was.

CHAPTER IX.

A HOME FOR THE HOMELESS.

O bright occasions of dispensing good,
How seldom used, how little understood!

COWPER.

THE scene of life, not long after this, closed on Mr. Norton, and he was respectfully committed to the grave by those who regarded him as more sinned against, than sinning. Perhaps he was viewed in a different light by Mr. Barclay, whose estimate of a parent's power and responsibilities was different from, and much higher than, most men's.

Mr. Barclay found John Norton's concerns, on investigation, not quite so bad as he feared. After settling the business and cancelling the indorsements of "Norton and Co.," the property vested in his printing-presses and that in the farm at Greenbrook remained. The press was a means of future accumulation, and the farm a polar star where he might still rest the eye of hope. It certainly was a severe disappointment to have the accumulations of years of vigorous labor swept away from him by the profligacy of others, — to have his dearest plans thwarted at the moment of their accomplish-

ment; but he bore the evil patiently, as became a Christian who was forearmed against the uncertainties of life. "We must now," he said at the conclusion of a long conversation on their affairs with his wife, "we must now show our children, what we have often told them, that it is not the circumstances of life that make our happiness or virtue, but the temper in which we meet them."

The children were made acquainted with the unfortunate turn in their affairs, and the necessity of the indefinite postponement of their removal to Greenbrook. This they all took to heart; but no event can make children long unhappy. Some ten days after old Mr. Norton's interment, the Barclays were assembled round a well-lighted table. Mrs. Barclay, with a large work-basket before her, was putting in that stitch in time which absorbs so large a portion of the life of the mother of half a dozen children. Charles and Wallace were seated on each side of her, drawing, acquiring at a leisure hour some knowledge of an art for which a man in almost every pursuit has some occasion. Alice was basting hems and ruling copy-books for the little girls' next day's work. Mary was dressing a doll for her youngest sister, grandmamma knitting in the corner, and Aunt Betsey making a very pretty

dress for her pet ; and finally Mr. Barclay was reading aloud the Life of Franklin, and making now and then such remarks as would tend to impress its valuable instruction on his children. He was interrupted by an involuntary exclamation from Alice of "Oh dear me!"

"What is the matter, Alice?"

"Nothing, only I can never make these red lines straight, in my arithmetic book. I wish Harry Norton was here, he does them so neatly."

"I wish he was here too," echoed Mary; "this doll's arm torments me so, — I cannot make it stay on."

"I was just thinking," said Wallace, "I would give any thing to have him come in, to show me how to stump this foreground."

"Oh! that's easy enough, Wallace," said Charles; "but I never can do these arches without his help; I wonder he does not come."

"He cannot come, Charles, and leave Emily alone."

"Why cannot Emily come too?"

"Dear me! I am sure nobody wants her," said Mary.

"And why not? I wonder."

"Because she is so hateful."

"Mary, my dear child! — that's a hard word

for you. Come here, and tell me what makes poor Emily so hateful."

"Because, sir, she is."

"Mary dear," said grandmamma, "your Bible tells you not to bring a 'railing accusation.'"

Grandmamma's gentle admonitions were seldom disregarded by the children. Mary looked crest-fallen, when Aunt Betsey came to her aid.

"Mary is quite right," she said; "Emily Norton is the most disagreeable little upstart that ever I came across."

"But how is she disagreeable? Come, Mary, let us know. I suspect there is some prejudice in the case. It is very important to poor little Emily that you should have no prejudices against her."

"I don't think they are prejudices," murmured Alice in an under voice.

"I know they are!" exclaimed Wallace.

"I think they are too," said Charles.

"Oh yes, boys: you think, because Miss Emily has such beautiful hair and eyes, and so forth, that she must be good."

"No, Alice," replied Charles, "it is not that; but I cannot believe that Harry Norton's own sister can be such a horrid creature."

"Dear me, Charles! I did not say she was a horrid creature, but I do say she is as different from Harry as night from day."

"My dear Alice, you speak very confidently, considering how little you know of Emily."

"Ah, father, that is the very thing. Miss Emily don't choose to know us. The first day we went to Smith's drawing-school, Sarah Scott asked her if she knew us. She said she knew our names. Sarah said something about our looking lady-like; Miss Emily drew up her little scornful mouth,—you need not smile, father, for those were Sarah's very words,—and said we might look so, but were not so, for 'sister said' nobody visited mother,—only think what a falsehood, sir,—and she advised Sarah not to get acquainted with us for she said '*sister* did not want her to.' Now, sir, do you think it is all prejudice?"

"Not all, my dear; but if we examine the matter, we may find that a part of it is. In the first place, I suspect the scornful mouth was an addition of Sarah Scott's; that young lady has a very lively imagination; and a sweeter-tempered mouth than Emily's, one farther removed from an expression of scorn, I never saw."

"So it is, sir, commonly, but you don't know how girls can twist and spoil their mouths when there are no grown people by. Besides, if Sarah did add that about the mouth, and I own she is apt to add and alter when she tells a

story, I am sure she did not make the rest; for whenever Emily meets Mary and me in Broadway, her eyes are suddenly staring every way; whatever else she sees, she never sees us."

"And," added Mary, "she is always dressed just like a grown-up lady. Oh, she does look too proud!"

Mr. Barclay waited a moment as if expecting something more, and then asked, "Is this all, my children?"

"All in particular, sir," replied Alice.

"I am sure it is quite enough!" said Aunt Betsey.

"Alice," said her father, "sit down on my knee,—here is another for you, Mary. Now let us see if we cannot find some apology for Emily."

"She will not care whether we do or not."

"Oh, my children! poor Emily has too much reason to care for your good opinion, now."

"Why, sir, now? don't she go and live with Mrs. John Norton?"

"No. Poor Emily has no home now."

"No home, father!"

The thought touched all their young kind hearts, and Emily was at once placed in a new aspect. Mr. Barclay took advantage of the favorable moment to proceed. "What do you

suppose, Alice, Mrs. Norton meant by telling Emily that nobody visited your mother?"

"I suppose she meant what she said, sir."

"Not at all, my dear. She meant that none of her visiting acquaintance visited us. Mrs. Norton calls all the people out of her circle nobody."

"What a silly woman!"

"Very silly, my dear; and I am sure if you reflect on it, you will very soon think with me, that Emily was more to be pitied than blamed for the notions she got from this woman, into whose hands she fell when she was so very young. Her father, you all know, was not the wisest man in the world. She had no mother. Harry was too young to guide her. Mrs. John Norton flattered her vanity, removed her entirely from her early associates, indulged her in every idle wish, and would have probably ruined the poor child, had it not pleased Providence to remove her from her influence. Mrs. Norton has gone back to her uncle's to live again in idle dependence upon him, and has shown how little real affection she had for Emily; for she has given herself no concern as to what is to become of her, though she knows she has not a penny, nor a relation to take care of her."

The children looked sad and pitiful

"She is young enough, I believe," continued Mr. Barclay, "to be admitted either into the orphan's asylum or the alms-house."

"Both very good places for her," said Aunt Betsey.

"Aunt Betsey!" exclaimed Charles; "Emily Norton go to the alms-house!"

"Harry's sister go to the alms-house, — awful!" cried Alice. "Do, father, let her come and live with us."

"Alice, are you beside yourself?" asked Aunt Betsey. "After your father has been all but ruined by old Norton, to think of his taking upon himself the support of Emily!"

Mr. Barclay went on, without directly answering either Alice or her aunt. "I have seen a great deal of little Emily since her father's death, and do not believe it will be difficult to give her right notions. Poor child, her heart is melted, and takes any impression you please to put upon it. She is any thing but proud now, Mary; and the fine clothes that offended you so much, are all gone."

"Gone, father?"

"Yes. I told her the greatest honor that children in their case could do to a father's memory, was, as far as possible, to pay his debts; and I told her what exertions and sacrifices Harry had made. She immediately went

upstairs, and packed up all her finery, — her little trinkets, and every ornamental thing she had in the world, and begged me to have them sold to pay the chambermaid, who had complained bitterly of the loss of the wages due to her.”

“Did she, father?” said Mary; “her watch, her gold chain, and her real enamel buckle?”

“Yes, my dear, those, and every article but her necessary clothes.”

“I always thought,” said Wallace, “that Emily had something noble in her.”

“I felt sure of it,” said Charles.

“Most persons, my dear boys, have something noble in them, if you but touch the right spring to set it in motion. I think poor little Emily has fine qualities, but her character will depend much on the circumstances in which she is placed, for she is easily influenced.”

“I like persons who are easily influenced,” said Wallace, as if thinking aloud. This was true, and a common disposition enough it is, with those who are strong willed, and who seem born, like our friend Wallace, to influence others.

“I called in on Harry and Emily as I came home to tea,” continued Mr. Barclay. “Their house is in complete order for the auction which is to take place to-morrow. Harry has

worked like a beaver, and with the help of one man and one woman and little Emily, who has done all she could, every thing is ready."

"Oh dear!" said Alice, heaving a deep sigh, "how sadly they must feel!"

"No, Alice, they do not, and they ought not. It is family love and happy domestic intercourse that attaches us to the inanimate objects of our home. This table around which we have so many pleasant gatherings, — the sofa, — grandmamma's rocking-chair, — the baby's cradle, are all so many signs, which, as often as you look upon them, call forth delightful feelings. No books or maps will ever look to you like those we have read and studied together. But suppose our parlor emptied of all it now contains, and costly furniture put in it, such as would make us appear *genteel* in other people's eyes; suppose we never entered it but to receive morning calls, or evening company: our vanity might be gratified, but do you think the furniture would excite any sensations worthy of the name of happiness?"

"No, sir, — no," was the general verdict.

"The case I have supposed is just that of Harry and Emily, — the family moved into a new house when John Norton was married, — all the old furniture was sent to auction, and new was bought. Harry has passed most of

his evenings with us, and poor little Emily, when they had not company at home, has been left alone with her father, who did not know how to amuse or instruct her, or with the servants, who were very unfit companions, for Mrs. John Norton was never nice in the selection of her servants, and was continually changing them. This evening, I found Harry and Emily in the little breakfast room. There was a light on the table, and a book from which Harry had been reading to his sister; but they had drawn near the fire. They were sitting on the same chair. Emily's arm was round his neck, and she was listening to what he was saying with such a tender, confiding look" —

"I wonder what he was saying, father," said Alice.

"Something of their separation, I believe, my dear."

"But why need they be separated, father? — why can't they both come and live with us?"

It had been a settled matter, from the moment of Mr. Norton's death, that Harry was to come into the family.

"Are you crazy, Alice!" asked Aunt Betsey.

"I am sure I don't think Alice crazy at all," said Mary. "There are two beds in our room, and Haddy sleeps with Alice, and I

should like of all things to have Emily sleep with me."

"And it is exceedingly important," said Wallace, as wise as Socrates on the occasion, "that Emily should live in a good place, because, father says, her character depends so much on circumstances."

"And where can she go, if she don't come here?" asked the tender-hearted Charles.

The children had arrived at the very point Mr. Barclay desired.

"Your right dispositions, my dear children," he said, "gratify me; but you must remember that it is on your mother that the burden of an increased family must chiefly fall. Consult her. If she is willing to extend the blessing of a home to both these orphan children, at the cost, as must needs be, of much labor and self-denial to herself, she will set us an example of disinterestedness and benevolence that we will try to follow."

The children now all clustered round their mother. To Mrs. Barclay, sound in health, serene in temper, and of most benignant disposition, no exertion for others seemed difficult; and with one of her sweetest smiles she said, that, as far as she was concerned, she should be most happy that Harry and Emily should not be separated. The children clapped their

hands, and returned to their father, shouting, "It's all settled."

"Not quite so fast; there is something yet to be considered. You all know that we allow ourselves a fixed sum for our annual expenses. If we indulge in the luxury of doing this kindness to Emily, we must all give up something. You and Mary, Alice, must give up the dancing-school that has been running in your heads for the last six weeks, and Charles and Wallace cannot have a drawing-master."

This suggestion seemed for a moment to abate the zeal of the young folks; but Alice, who was always the first to clear away obstructions, said, after a little reflection, "Oh! well, never mind the dancing-school. I have thought of a nice plan, — Emily is Mr. Chanaud's best scholar, — she can give us lessons in the garret. It is a good place for dancing, and we shall not disturb grandmamma there."

"And as to the drawing, sir," said Charles, "With a little of Harry's help we can teach ourselves; and when we have such a good motive for it, we shall take twice as much pains as if we had a master."

"Well, my good children, we will all take it into consideration, and if we are of the same mind to-morrow night, Emily shall come to us with Harry."

This conversation had not, as may well be supposed, occurred without much consultation between Mr. and Mrs. Barclay. They thought they could not do a more certain good, than by extending the advantages of their home to the young Nortons. They hoped this might be an acceptable expression of their gratitude to Providence for their domestic blessings. They knew their children had some prepossessions against Emily, and Mr. Barclay had undertaken to turn the current of their feelings in her favor. In this he had so far succeeded, that her entrance into the family was a favor accorded to them; and thus, instead of coming among them an object of their prejudice and distrust, they henceforth considered themselves as Emily's champions and protectors. Each one was anxious to shelter her infirmities, to set her in a favorable light, and to make her new home as happy as possible.

When all the family had retired excepting Mrs. Barclay and her sister, Aunt Betsey jerked round her chair, put her feet on the fender, and gave vent to her pent-up feelings. By the way, it should be said in Aunt Betsey's favor, that fretting was her safety-valve; she thus let off her petty irritations, and in conduct she was not less humane than most persons.

"You are the oddest people," she began,

“that I ever came across; with seven children, and the Lord knows how many more you may have, the old lady and myself, and only Martha for help, to undertake these two children that have no claim on earth upon you. Claim! the children of your greatest enemy, the man that has all but ruined you, and in such an underhand way too,—a pretty reward for knavery! I hope you mean to put up a sign, William Barclay & Co.’s orphan asylum, or alms-house!”

Mrs. Barclay was too much accustomed to her sister’s railing to be disturbed by it.

“If it were more the practice, Betsey,” she mildly replied, “for those who have homes to extend the blessing to those who have them not, there would be little occasion for orphan asylums, and the charity now done by the public, would be more effectively done in private families.”

“I see no advantage whatever in turning private houses into alms-houses and such sort of places. I always thought home was a sacred place, from which it was a duty to shut out every thing disagreeable and unpleasant.”

Fortunately Aunt Betsey’s self-love prevented her perceiving how hard this rule would bear upon herself. Her brother-in-law had given her a home, simply because her temper

was so uncomfortable, that no other member of her family was willing to receive her, — none other could have borne and forborne with her, — none other would have made allowances for the trials of her single and solitary condition, and by always opposing a smooth surface to her sharp corners, have gradually worn them down.

“It is a duty, as you say, Betsey,” replied her sister, “to exclude every thing permanently disagreeable from the family; for home should resemble heaven in happiness as well as love. But we cannot exclude from our earthly homes the infirmities of humanity. There are few persons, no *young* persons, who, if they are treated wisely and tenderly, will not be found to have more good than evil in them. In the Nortons, I am sure, the good greatly preponderates. Our children, we think, will be benefited by having new excitements to kindness, generosity, and forbearance.”

“Well, if your children must have these excitements, as you call them, why under the sun don’t you find some folks to take in, besides the children of the man that robbed you of all you’ve been toiling for and saving, for this dozen years and more?”

“O Betsey! it does seem to me that, seeing, you see not. I don’t mean to hurt you,

—but how can you help feeling Mr. Barclay's nobleness, his truly Christian spirit in this matter? how he has returned good for evil, and overcome evil with good!" Annt Betsey said nothing, and Mrs. Barclay proceeded, "Our children, I am sure, cannot but profit by such an example."

"But they don't need it. You are both of you always teaching them."

"'Example is better than precept,' Betsey."

"Well, let that rest. But I should like to know how you can afford to set such examples?"

"As to that, the way is clear enough. Harry's earnings will pay his board and all his other expenses. He will only be indebted to us, for what, he says, he esteems above all other things, a home in our house."

"But little Miss Emily cannot be boarded, clothed, and schooled for nothing."

"Certainly not; but the expense of feeding a little girl in a family where there are three abundant meals a day is really trifling. The cost of Alice's clothes has never exceeded thirty dollars a year; Emily's will not cost more."

"No, to be sure. You will not have to buy new for her. She is so much more slender than Alice, that I can easily manage to make Alice's old frocks over for her."

"Thank you, Betsey; but I would rather Alice should take hers. A person in a situation Emily will hold, should never be degraded in the eyes of others, or her own, by any such sign of dependence or inferiority. That is a very poor kindness done to the body, which results in injury to the mind."

Aunt Betsey was reduced to biting her nails, and her sister proceeded. "Emily's schooling, it is true, will be expensive. Pity it is, that it is so, in a country, where, of all others, good teaching should be cheap and easily attained; but it is not so, at least in this city. However, Mr. Barclay is quite willing to meet the expense, whatever it may be."

"Oh, I dare say, — 'Education the best investment of capital,' — you know he is always harping on that; but when you have precious little to invest, it is worth while to consider. That's all I have to say."

"We have *considered*, Betsey. Mr. Barclay, whose noble nature it is, as you know, to impart of his abundance to others, — freely to give what he so freely receives, — says that his business was never more productive than at this moment. We cannot therefore go on fretting over our losses. We shall continue to live frugally, and to educate our girls and Emily to earn their own living, should it be

necessary. Harry's highest ambition for Emily is, that she should be qualified for a teacher. He will himself be a great assistance to her."

"That he will. He is not like other boys, — Harry is not."

"I shall endeavor," continued Mrs. Barclay, "in my domestic school, to qualify Emily for the offices of wife and mother. These in all human probability she will fill, — she may never be a teacher. You will help us, Betsey, and we will not give grudgingly. If her faults trouble us, let us remember how sadly the poor child has been neglected. All children, the best of them, require patience."

"Patience! — yes, the patience of Job."

"Emily may prove better and more agreeable than we expect, and we may be thankful to Providence for enabling us to take the homeless young creatures into the family."

Aunt Betsey was softened by being put in the light of a participator in the boon to Emily, and, as she took up her lamp to go to bed, she said in a tone of real kindness, — "I'll try to do my part."

Ah, if all the individuals of the human family would "*do their part*," there would be no wanderers, no outcasts. The chain of mutual dependence would be preserved unbroken, strong, and bright. All would be linked

together in the bonds of natural affection and Christian love, — the bonds of unity and peace.



CHAPTER X.

A PEEP INTO THE HIVE.

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower.

WATTS.

MANY persons who act from generous impulses, are soon checked and disheartened in a course of benevolence, merely from not having judiciously surveyed the ground before them and estimated the necessary amount of efforts, that is, *counted the cost*. Those who are true disciples of that devoted friend of man, whose whole life was a succession of painful efforts and self-sacrifice, will not become wearied with a duty because it demands labor and self-denial. The Barclays knew that two additional members of their family must bring them additional anxiety and toil; and, when it came, they endured it

cheerfully, yes, thankfully, as faithful servants, who are zealous to perform well an extra task for a kind master.

Emily Norton, daintily bred and petted from her infancy, had the habits, though not the vicious dispositions, that sometimes grow out of indulgence. Her pride and little vanities had taken but slight root in her heart, and they were swept away by the storm that passed over her father's house. But never was a little fine lady more thoroughly helpless and good for nothing than Emily, when she entered the Barclay family; but, once in that hive, where every little busy bee did its appointed task, where labor was rendered cheerful by participation, and light by regularity and order, she gradually worked into the ways of the household, and enjoyed, through the whole of her after-life, the happy results of well-directed effort. But this was not achieved without much watchfulness and patience on the part of her benefactress, much good-natured forbearance on the part of the children, and many a struggle and heart-ache on the part of the poor child.

Many a scene resembling the following, occurred after she entered the family.

"You have promised to be one of my children, dear Emily," said Mrs. Barclay, at the

close of a long conversation with her; "I intend to treat you precisely as I do them." She then went through with the enumeration of various household offices which she expected Emily to perform, and concluded with saying, "The girls take care of their apartment week and week about. I hold any want of neatness and order in a young lady's room to be an abomination, and I never excuse it. This is Alice's week; the next Mary's; the week after will be yours. In the mean time, observe how they manage, and when it comes your turn, you will have learned their way. Remember, dear, there is a right and a wrong way to do every thing."

Emily was sure, that, before her turn came, she should know how to take care of the room as well as the other girls; but Emily was yet to learn that "practice alone makes perfect." Her week came. Alice entered her mother's room, and shutting the door after her, and lowering her voice, "Do mother," she said, "let Mary go and do our room, and let Emily come and tend the baby;—it's the only thing she is fit for."

"She certainly does that better than either you or Mary. She gives her undivided attention to it, while you and Mary must always be doing something else."

"I know that, mother, but then" —

"Then what?"

"Tending baby is a lazy sort of business that just suits Emily."

"She is not lazy about it; on the contrary she is indefatigable in trying to please Effie and Effie's mother."

"So she is, ma'am, I own; and so I wish you would keep her at it, and let us do what she can't do, and we like best."

"That would be hardly just to either Emily or you, as there is a great deal besides tending baby that a woman ought to know how to do, and tending baby every woman must know how to do."

"Well, I suppose she must learn, but I don't know when, nor how. To tell the truth, mother, she is a real cry-baby. It is almost school-time, and she has not touched the beds yet. They are just as we left them, this morning, — the bed-clothes stripped off, the pillows on the window-sill airing, and she sitting down and crying. I cannot get one word out of her."

"Perhaps she cannot turn over the mattresses, Alice."

"Mother! — those light mattresses!"

"Light to you, my dear, but you must remember that Emily probably never made

a bed in her life, and that what is light to you, is an Herculean task to her. Suppose, Alice, you were to go to live in another family, and were required to do something you had never done."

"I should try, mother; I should not sit down and cry." And so she would have done; for Alice, though by some months younger than Emily, had been in the habit of using all her faculties of mind and body. She was a Hebe in health, and the very spirit of cheerfulness, so that no task looked formidable in her eyes.

"Alice," said her mother, "if you were to see a poor child whose hands had been tied up from her birth, who by gross mismanagement had been robbed of the energy of her mind, and half the health and strength natural to her, would not you be grieved for her, and take pains to restore her to the use of her faculties?"

"To be sure I should, mother."

"Then go back to Emily. Do not ask her what troubles her. She will be ashamed to tell you, but offer to help her turn over the mattresses, and assist her in whatever else seems to come awkwardly to her. Help her bear her burden at first, and after a while she will be able to bear it all herself. Be delicate and gentle with her, dear. Above all, do not

laugh at her. Don't come to me again. Settle the matter yourself. It is best I should not interfere."

From the moment Alice felt that the responsibility of getting Emily on, rested on herself, she felt at once eager for success; and, more good-natured than the god in the fable, she hurried back to put her shoulder to the wheel."

"Emily, dear," she said kindly, "I don't think you feel very well this morning."

"Yes, I do, Alice, perfectly well," replied Emily, in a voice that sounded as if it came from the tombs.

"Well, come then, Emily, you had better make haste,—it is past eight,—come, jump up,—I will give you a lift. These mattresses are too heavy for you, till you can get used to them, and then they will seem as light as a feather;" and, suiting the action to the word, she threw over the mattresses, while Emily crept languidly to the other side of the bed.

"Now let's beat it up, Emily, and then we will have the clothes on in an instant. There, smooth that sheet down, dear. Mother makes us as particular as old women about making up the beds,—lay the pillow straight, Emy,—plummet and line, you know,—now, hem over the sheet this fashion,—there, it is done! and I defy a Shaker to make a bed better."

Emily was inspired by Alice's cheerful kindness, and, when they went to the other bed, she begged Alice to let her try to do it alone. She tried, as if she had a mountain to move, but all in vain. Alice looked the other way to hide her smiles.

"I can't possibly do it!" said Emily, despairingly.

"Poor thing!" thought Alice, "her hands, as mother says, have indeed been tied; but we'll contrive to loosen them." "Take hold here, Emily," she said; "not with just the little tips of your fingers, but so, — with your whole hand, — there it goes! — Oh, you'll soon learn."

"Do you really think I ever shall, Alice?"

"Ever! Yes, indeed, very soon. I will show you a little every day and you will edge on by degrees. The world was not made in a day, you know, as Aunt Betsey says."

"But the sweeping, Alice? Do not, pray, tell anybody, but I never swept a room in my life."

A girl of her own age who did not know how to sweep a room, seemed to Alice an object of equal wonder and commiseration. She, however, suppressed the exclamation that rose to her lips, and merely said, "Well, that is not

your fault, Emily; take the broom and I will show you."

Emily took it. "Oh not so, Emily, — no, not so; — just see me." Again Emily began, and looked so anxious and worked so desperately hard, that Alice could scarcely forbear laughing outright. She did, however, and very kindly and patiently continued to instruct Emily, till the mighty task was finished.

"Oh! you will learn after a while," she said, as poor Emily set down the broom and sunk into a chair, out of breath and looking at her reddened palms. "I will teach you to sweep, and you shall teach me to dance, Emily."

"Oh! you are very, very kind, Alice. I am sure I think it is worth a great deal more to know how to sweep than how to dance."

"And so do I," said Alice; "and yet we take a great deal of pains for the one, and the other we learn, we don't know how."

Alice spoke truly. We learn, *we don't know how*, the arts of domestic life, — the manual of a woman's household duties.

Some among Mrs. Barclay's friends wondered she did not "get more out of Martha," and they never could exhaust their astonishment at what they called her *inconsistency* (a very convenient, indefinite word) in giving her girls accomplishments, strictly so called,

and putting them to the humblest domestic employments. The Barclays neither saw, nor had they ever occasion to feel, this incompatibility. They believed that there was no way so certain of giving their boys habits of order, regularity, and neatness, and of inspiring them with a grateful consideration for that sex whose lot it is to be the domestic ministers of boy and man, as the being early accustomed to receive household services from their mother and sisters, — from those they respected and loved. They believed, too, that their girls, destined to play the parts of wives and mothers, in a country where it is difficult and sometimes impossible to obtain servants, would be made most independent and consequently most happy, by having their *getting along* faculties developed by use. These little operatives, by light labors which encroached neither upon their hours of study nor social pleasure, became industrious, efficient, and orderly, and were trained to be the dispensers of comfort in that true and best sphere of woman, *home*. Equal, too, would they be to either fortune: if mistresses, capable, just, and considerate, towards those who served them; and if, perchance, obliged to perform their own domestic labor, their practical acquaintance with the process would make it light and cheerful.

Never, we believe, was there a pleasanter domestic scene, than the home of the Barclays ; — Martha, the queen-bee, in her kitchen, as clean as any parlor, or as (to use the superlative degree of comparison) the kitchen of the pale, joyless Shakers ; her little handmaids in her school of mutual aid and instruction, with their sleeves rolled up from their fat, fair arms, their curls tucked under their caps, and their gingham aprons, learning the mysteries of cake and pastry manufacture, pickling, preserving, and other coarser arts ; while another little maiden, her eyes sparkling and her cheeks flushed with exercise, might be heard plying her broom “upstairs and downstairs and in the lady’s chamber,” and warbling songs that might soothe the savage breast, for they breathed the very soul of health and cheerfulness.

Nor were they in the least disqualified by these household duties for more refined employments ; and when they assembled in the evening, with their pretty work-boxes and fancy-work, their books and drawing, they formed a group to grace any drawing-room in the land.

Their labors and their pleasures were transitory, but the vivifying spirit of love and intelligence that informed them was abiding, and was carrying them on to higher and higher

stages of improvement, and preparing them for that period to which their efforts and hopes pointed, when the terrestrial shall put on the celestial.



CHAPTER XI.

GOING HOME TO GREENBROOK.

And yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and large garden have,
And a few friends and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too.

COWLEY.

THE race, we well know, is not always to the swift, nor the battle always to the strong; and the Barclays, like others, were sometimes thwarted in their plans and disappointed in their expectations. There were early indications in their eldest son of a fragile constitution, attended by the consequent preference of mental to corporeal labor. He had a fondness almost amounting to a passion for books, and his father, who sympathized in his tastes, and did not at first perceive the alarming influence of their gratification on his health, encouraged them. "Charles's destiny is cer-

tainly for one of the learned professions," he thought, and accordingly he stimulated him in the pursuits that would qualify him for them. But when, from thirteen to fifteen, he found that he was losing the little vigor he possessed, instead of gaining any, — that his eye was getting the sunken, and his cheek the pale and hollow appearance, that is so generally the effect of sedentary life in our country (why, the physiologist must explain), — he resolved to change his pursuits; and he persuaded Charles (Charles was the most persuadable of mortals) to abandon his books and go and work on the farm at Greenbrook. "I had rather, my dear boy," he said, "see you a common healthful laborer in the country, than such a miserable dyspeptic as are half our lawyers, doctors, and ministers; when life is a burden to the possessor, it is not apt to be very profitable to anybody else."

So Charles henceforth passed nine months of every year with the skilful cultivator to whom Mr. Barelay rented his farm. At first this seemed very much like exile to the poor fellow; but his character was too flexible and too well-regulated, not to adapt itself to circumstances, and, instead of repining over defeated hopes, he set himself to work to see and increase the good of his new occupations.

He found there was no occasion for his intellect to sleep on a farm, but that mother Earth had studies enough in her laboratory to employ all the faculties of her children; that there was a world of knowledge for the curious student of nature in the difference of soils, in the effect of temperatures, the nature of plants, the composition and application of manures, and the habits of animals. He felt an interest that never abated, in the improvement of the farm, and in beautifying it for the residence of the family. It was certainly to be their home at some future day; and in the mean time the mother and children came there to pass three months of every year, and always found some new charm, some new manifestation of Charles's taste, and affection for his family. The slope between the house and the river, with its natural terraces, was spread out to the morning sun, and Charles thought it was treason against nature not to improve it according to her suggestion. So the green turf gave place to a well spaded garden, where from year to year were planted shrubs, vines, and fruit-trees. The strawberry beds were doubled, because strawberries were "mother's favorite fruit." Unwearied pains were taken to bring on the greengages for father. A woody, *scrawny* lilac was permitted

to remain, because grandmamma had said, "It looked so natural that she loved to see it." But, above all, an especial blessing seemed to fall on Emily's favorite plants and flowers; whatever she liked sprung up like the roses under the feet of the fairy's favorite, and grew and luxuriated as if the sunbeams and the dews of heaven were given to favoritism. The garden was overrun with violets of every species, and honeysuckles and white roses grew like weeds about the old porch, mounted over and even peeped into Emily's window, and ran round the pretty well-curb which Charles built over the old well, where "the old oaken bucket, the moss-covered bucket," of his grandfather's time, newly hooped, still swung. There is a magic that can direct and double the secret powers of nature; and Emily Norton, bright, sweet-tempered, and lovely, might call this magic into operation. The three summer months she passed at Greenbrook; the three winter months Charles was in New York; thus their intercourse was scarcely interrupted, and, for aught any one observed, it retained, from year to year, its frank, confiding, and fraternal character.

But Charles did not limit his interest to the family in New York. He was a prodigious favorite with the inhabitants of Greenbrook.

The old people liked his "serious turn," and prophesied that he would make his grandfather's (the minister's) place good. The contemporaries of his parents pronounced him, some of them, "just like his father," and others "just like his mother," "but not quite equal to either." Every social pleasure was imperfect to the young, if Charles was not with them; and even the poor laborers, black and white, said their work seemed light when Charles worked with them. Does the question of the transmission of the virtues belong to physiology, or to philosophy and religion?

We have now come to an important era in the history of the Barclays! Eight years, busy, fruitful years, have glided away,—their fortunes are repaired,—a partnership in the printing establishment is formed between Harry Norton and Wallace, and the family are now actually realizing their long-cherished hopes, and removing to Greenbrook. The old parsonage, which had been built when there was a "glut" of timber and a scarcity of every thing else, had still a firm foundation and sound rafters, and by dint of knocking away the old porch (without detriment, let it be observed, to Emily's favorites), making a little addition here, and a little alteration there, it looked like a most comfortable dwelling to the

passing stranger, and to Mr. Barclay, like an old friend in new apparel.

The Americans are sometimes reproached with being deficient in that love for the home of childhood, which is so general a feature of the human race, that it was supposed to be universal, till an exception was made to our discredit. If this be so (we believe it is not, at least in New England, for which, alone, we can answer), it should be remembered, in palliation of the unnatural sin, that our homes are comparatively recent, not consecrated by the memories of centuries, and that the Yankee boy, from the earliest period of forecast, dreams of seeking his fortune in the richer soil and kinder climate which his far-spread country provides for him. He goes, but his heart lingers at the *homestead*. Many a yeoman who has felled the trees of the western forest have we heard confess, that through weary months he pined with that bitterest of all maladies, home-sickness; and that, even after years had passed, no day went by, that his thoughts did not return to his father's house, nor night that did not restore him to *the old place*. And when age and hardship have furrowed his cheek, and grayed and thinned his hair, and bent his sturdy frame, he may be seen travelling hundreds and hundreds of miles to revisit

"*the old place*," — to linger about the haunts of his childhood, and live over, for a few brief days, the sunny hours of youth. Then (as we have heard him) he says "I have a richer farm at the West, than any in New England, — it is a wonderful *growing* country — my house is bigger than Colonel R — —'s or Doctor P — —'s" (the palaces of his native village), "but, dear me! it has not the pleasant look of *the old place*."

And if it be true that our hearts are dead to this love of "our own, our native land," why is it that so many, with the fire of enterprise burning in their young bosoms, and the *West* with mines of gold in its unbroken soil alluring them, still linger about *the old place*, — still patiently plough our stony hills, and subdue our cold morasses? No, God has not denied, to any of his creatures, from the time that the exiles of Judæa hung their harps on the willows of a strange land, to the present moment, that strong love of birthplace which tempers, to the native, the fierce winds of the north, and the fiercer heats of the Equator, — which equalizes every soil, and gives that inimitable, that "pleasant look" to *the old place*.

A few evenings after the family were quietly established at the old place, and in a soft, fragrant June evening, they assembled on the

piazza, just as the moon was rising above the hazy line of mountain that bounded the eastern horizon, and sending a flood of softened radiance through the valley. "Oh," exclaimed Effie, "how much bigger the moon looks, than it does in New York!"

"That's because"—said William, eager to impart a little science which he had just acquired.

"Pshaw, Willie! I don't always want to know the cause; every thing here is bigger, and brighter, and pleasanter, and sweeter than in New York, because it is, and that is enough."

William appealed to his father, whether it were not best always to find out the reason of the thing.

"Certainly, my dear boy, if you can; unless like Effie, and Effie's father at this moment, you are so brimful of satisfaction that nothing can add to it."

"And do you think, sir," asked Harry Norton, who was sitting with Alice at one end of the piazza, under a closely woven honeysuckle, "do you think you shall continue satisfied with your present tranquil enjoyments? Will you not miss the occupation of the office?"

"No, I shall substitute the occupations of my garden and farm, which are far more agreeable to me."

"But will you not miss the excitements of the city?"

"I think not, Harry. The excitements of the country are underrated. Here nature is the kind and healthful minister to the keen appetite for sensation. The changes of the seasons, the rising and setting of the sun, droughts and floods, a good crop, a blight, — frosts and showers, are all excitements. In the country the tie of human brotherhood is felt through the circle, the social electric chain is bound so closely that the vibration of every touch is felt. We not only sympathize with the great joys and sorrows of our neighbors, but in all the little circumstances that make up life. The whole village was alive this afternoon with the running away of Allen's horse; and when they heard that the widow Ray's boy, Sam, had been thrown from the cart and injured, what sympathy was manifested! what running to and from the widow's! what profferings of aid, advice, and consolation! The wreck of an omnibus in Broadway would not have caused half so much commotion. The children were as much excited by their berrying frolic yesterday, as they would have been by a visit to Scudder's Museum; and they are as eager to see Deacon Bennett's twin lambs, as they would be to see a Chinese, or a mysterious or invisible lady."

"Oh! I do not doubt, sir, that children may find excitement anywhere; but I speak of yourself and Mrs. Barclay."

"Ah, Harry, it is a sad mistake that some people, even at our time of life, make, to depend on *events* for excitement. How can we want for excitement in our brief lives, while there is so much knowledge to be gained and so much good to be done? We have not here the abject poverty and brutish ignorance that exist among the foreigners in the city, but 'the poor we have always with us;' the poor, whose condition may be raised; the sick, whose sufferings may be alleviated; the ignorant, who may be instructed; the idle and vicious, who may be reclaimed. The *excitement* must be within ourselves, in a respect for our species, in a deep, inexhaustible love for them."

"I ought to have known better," said Harry, "than to ask you such an idle question, after living with you eight years. I see but one deficiency here; you will miss the society of town."

"No, Harry, I think not. I confess that in this matter of society, I have been somewhat disappointed. There has not been so rapid an improvement as I expected; but we must have patience. It takes time to change the

forms of society ; to give a new direction to a current that has been wearing into its channel for centuries. Distinctions in our city are favored by great disparities of fortune, and cherished perhaps equally by the pride, arrogance, and little vanities of the exclusives, and the servile imitations, the eager striving, the want of real independence and self-respect in the second class. You know, Harry, that I have no fanciful expectations of a perfect equality, a dead level ; this can only exist among such savages as the Hottentots. But I believe the time will come, — not in my day, perhaps not in yours, — but it will come, as soon as the social spirit of the Christian religion is understood, when society will only be an extension of the intercourse of home, when we shall meet together for intellectual intercourse, for the generous exchange of knowledge and of all the charities of social life. Then the just and full influence of mind and heart will be felt on society, and then our religious emotions and affections will no longer be kept for the closet and the church. But to realize those social benefits which our religion has yet in store for us, we must first realize that we have a common nature and destiny. I have made a harangue, instead of giving a plain answer to your question, whether I

should not miss the society of town. You know that what is called society there, was inaccessible to me. While I was an actual printer with a moderate fortune, I was without the barriers. The mechanics in the city are unfortunately too much absorbed in their occupations to care for the pleasures of society, or to prepare their children for it. We had, you know, a few valuable friends with whom we lived on terms of intimacy; but our intercourse was very limited, and we did not escape the reproach of being unsocial. Now, in Greenbrook, society — you smile, Harry, but I do not mean society in the conventional sense — approaches my standard. The intrinsic claims of each individual are known and admitted. Whether a man be lawyer, farmer, or mechanic, matters not, if he be intelligent and respectable. Mr. Barlow, one of the most eminent lawyers in the state, does not esteem my family one grade below his, and I esteem no man's below mine provided" —

"Ah, there is a *provided* then, sir?"

"Stop, my dear fellow, hear me out, — provided my neighbor is a man of good morals, that he has knowledge and is willing to impart it, or, being ignorant, that he wishes to be enlightened; and provided he does not offend against the usages of civilized society."

"But is there not a barrier in what you call the usages of civilized society, that will be effectual against some of your rough neighbors?"

"I think not. They lack some refinements and graces, but these are not essential; and if they never learn, their children will be very apt to do so, from a good example among their contemporaries. City families that remove into the country, so far from endeavoring to benefit their country neighbors by communicating any real refinements, alarm their pride by artificial manners, and by keeping up the modes of town life. We shall not be apt to do this. Mrs. Barclay arranges our domestic matters with such plainness and simplicity, that there is nothing appalling to our country neighbors; and as to my girls, if they should give themselves any city airs, I will *dump* them in Greenwich street again; and let Miss Alice show off her *style* in the establishment offered by her rich lover."

"Father! — pray" —

"I beg your pardon, my dear girl. I thought Harry knew before this time to whom and to what you had preferred him."

"He knows," replied Alice blushing, "that I prefer him to all the world."

"That is quite enough, Alice, and you shall

tell or not tell particulars, as you like. But come, Harry, adjourn your whisperings to Alice, and hear me out. You know I have a notion that wherever we are placed in life, there we have a mission. I do not mean to assume the invidious character of a reformer, in Greenbrook. No, but I mean to be a fellow-worker with my good friends and neighbors here. Many things they know better than I; I some, better than they. All society should be a school of mutual instruction, and in this school much is effected by the silent and gentle force of example. I hope to do something in this way towards elevating the pursuits of my Greenbrook friends. We may perhaps teach them that more than they have thought of may be done in a well-regulated home."

"Yes, sir, and they might imitate you, if there were more Mr. and Mrs. Barclays in the world."

"Ah, Harry, it is not the superior capacity that accomplishes most, but setting out with a firm purpose to attain a certain object. Your mother, Alice, began life with a determination to make a happy home. As she is not present, I may say of her what she would not permit me to say, if she were here."

"Oh, let me speak of her, sir," interrupted Harry Norton.

"Let me speak of her," said the modest Emily.

"Oh, I guess we all love to speak of mother, if speaking means praising," cried little Effie.

Grandmamma's tremulous voice hushed all others. "'Her children arise up and call her blessed,'" she said; "'her husband also, and he praiseth her.'"

"Yes, ma'am," said Harry; "that, and every other verse in Scripture that describes a virtuous woman, might be applied to her; and those who have not the natural rights of children might rise up too and call her blessed, — those on whom she has bestowed a mother's care and tenderness. And what, that woman should do, has she left undone? How faithfully she has performed all the duties of her lot, how generously undertaken those that were not imposed on her! What sense she has manifested, what beautiful order and neatness in her domestic economy; and in a higher moral economy, how she excels all others. How she sees and foresees, provides against all wants, avoids irritations and jealousies, economizes happiness, saving those little odds and ends that others waste! How she employs the faculties of all, brings the virtue of each into operation, and, if she cannot cure, shelters faults! She shows each in the best light, and is herself the light that shines on all, — the sun of her *home*."

"Do not flatter, Harry," said Mr. Barclay, in a voice, however, which proved that he felt this was no flattery.

"Oh, Mr. Barclay," said Emily, "we must sometimes speak out our hearts, or they would burst!"

"It is testimony, not flattery," added Harry.



CHAPTER XII.

CROSS-PURPOSES.

"The worst fault you have, is to be in love."

A LETTER was one morning brought to Mrs. Barclay, while she was sitting amidst her family. She read it twice over, and then without speaking laid it on the table. "No bad news, I hope, mother?" said Alice, inquiringly.

"It ought to be good news, Alice, and yet I am afraid we shall all feel as if it were very bad."

Mrs. Barclay took up the letter, and read it aloud. It proved to be an application from a Carolinian lady, to whom Emily had been recommended as a governess. There were three young children to be instructed, and very generous terms were offered. Mrs. Barclay made no comments.

"I am sure I ought to be very glad and thankful," said Emily, in a voice that indicated how far *I ought* was from *I am*.

"Glad and thankful," echoed Alice, "for an opportunity to leave us, just as we have all come to be so happy here! No indeed, Emily, you shall not leave us now."

"Now nor ever," thought Wallace, "if I can prevent it." He looked eagerly towards his mother, in the hope she would put in a discouraging word; but she did not speak, and he ventured to say, "It is very little in the lady's favor, that she asks Emily to go to the South at this season."

"That is quite conclusive against the project, mother," said Charles.

"Neither you nor Charles, Wallace," replied their mother, "seems to have noticed that the lady states her residence to be a very healthy one, on a plantation."

The young men had received but one impression from the letter. The word plantation struck on Effie's ear. "What, mother," she exclaimed, "let Emily go and live where there are slaves! Oh, no, that we will all vote against; won't you, Alice? and you? and you?" she continued, addressing each person in the room.

The vote was unanimous till she came to her

mother, who said, "I am afraid we should always find some good reason against Emily's leaving us."

"And why need she ever leave us, mother? Why not stay and teach us?"

"I have already taught you, dear Effie, all I know."

"Ah, but now we are at Greenbrook, you can have a new scholar."

"Who, Effie?" asked Emily, little aware of the toils into which she was falling.

"Charles."

"And what in the world can I teach Charles?"

"What you have taught all the rest of us, — what you teach best, — and without seeming to try, too."

"And what can that be, Effie?"

The little girl threw her arms round Emily's neck, and, looking fondly in her face, replied, "To love you."

Wallace was standing by the window, apparently absorbed in playing with a pet squirrel which Charles had tamed for Emily. His eye involuntarily turned towards her, and encountered hers. A blush suffused her cheek. Wallace flung the squirrel from him. "Did Bob bite you?" asked Effie, observing the sudden change of her brother's countenance.

"Yes, — no, no," he replied, and hurried out of the room in no very tranquil frame of mind. He went he knew not where, and did he knew not what, till Alice ran down the steps of the piazza exclaiming, "Wallace! Wallace! don't break off those carnations; don't you see how nicely Emily has shaded them from the sun to preserve them as long as possible? Oh, what a pity you have broken this off! Charles has taken such pains to have it as fine as possible for Emily."

"For *Emily*?"

There was a world of meaning in this concise inquiry, but Alice did not comprehend it. "Yes, for Emily. What is there strange in that? Emily is very fond of carnations."

The impetuosity which had appeared in out-creakings of temper in Wallace's childhood, was now manifest in decision, energy, and ardent affections. Natural qualities may be modified by moral education, not extirpated; — the stream will flow, its course may be directed. "Come with me down this walk, Alice," said her brother; "I have something to ask you, and you must answer me frankly." His voice became tremulous, but he proceeded: "Alice, you girls have a way of finding out one another's feelings; — I do not ask you to betray confidence, but you may have observed

something, — there may have been some accidental betrayal, — tell me at once, Alice."

"Tell you what, Wallace?"

"You certainly understand me."

"Indeed I do not."

"Then in plain English, do you think Emily" — he stammered, but in plain English it must be spoken, and he proceeded, "has any partiality for Charles?"

"Wallace!" exclaimed Alice, on whom the truth now for the first time glimmered.

"Answer me truly, my dear sister; all I want is, to know the truth."

"Why, — it is difficult to judge of Emily; she has a way of always laughing about such matters. She is not in the least sentimental, you know.

"Not foolishly sentimental, but she has strong feelings."

"Very strong."

"Then if she has a preference, I am sure she must at some time have betrayed it."

"Not of course, Wallace. I am sure your feelings are strong enough, and yet I never suspected" —

"There were reasons for that; but girls are always confidential. Come, Alice, do put me out of misery."

"If I could, Wallace."

"Then you do think she loves Charles?"

"Yes, I think she cares more for him than for any one else."

"I don't believe it!" The exclamation was involuntary. Wallace was ashamed: he tried to keep down his rising heart. "I beg your pardon, Alice," he said: "but—I may have been dreaming; what indications have you observed?"

"When we are together, she talks ten times as much of Charles, as you."—"That is no proof," thought Wallace.—"When he was at Greenbrook and we in town," continued Alice, "we agreed to write to him alternately; her letter was always ready in time, filled and crossed, and often she wrote in my turn. Charles used to say it was like being at home to get one of her letters. To be sure there was nothing particular in them; they were such as a sister might write."

Wallace thought over the only two letters he had ever received from Emily. Snatches of letters they were, rambling and indefinite; but he thought they were not such as a sister would write, and he felt a painful sort of triumph in thinking they were not. "A little circumstance occurred not long ago," continued Alice, "that, as I thought, let me into the real state of Emily's feelings. The evening Harry

and I made our engagement, we were walking on the Battery all the evening. The family believed I had been walking with Charles, and I did not feel like undeceiving them; but when I went to our room with Emily, it seemed as if my heart would burst if I did not speak. I threw my arms around her neck, and called her my future sister. She misunderstood me; I felt her tears on my cheek, and she said something about my being too good, and Charles too good, and all that; so I was forced to relieve her embarrassment, and tell plainly my meaning. I believed she had only anticipated a little, for I was sure Charles loved her; are you not, Wallace?"

"Yes, Alice, too sure; but I have been strangely blind,—it never occurred to me till within the last two hours. I am not equally sure that"—Emily loves him, he would have added; but he could not communicate the reasons of his long-cherished opinions, or rather hopes, on the subject of Emily's affections, and he abruptly turned away and left his sister to solitary and painful reflection. "Poor Wallace!" she thought, "it would have been far easier for Charles to have gotten over it; his feelings are so much more gentle and manageable."

Hour after hour passed away while Wallace

unconsciously wandered along the river's bank, revolving the past, balancing every trifling circumstance to which love, and hope, and fear gave weight, and painfully meditating on the future, — on what he could do and what he ought to do; the *ought* soon becomes the *could* in a virtuous mind.

Circumstances had led the brothers very innocently into the indulgence of these jarring hopes. Nothing was more natural, than that an intimate intercourse with a girl very lovely in person and character, and attractive in manners, should excite their affections, and that affection in the boy should ripen into love in the man. It was not so natural that each should indulge his own hopes, form his own plans, and never suspect the sentiments of his brother. For the last half dozen years, Charles had been for nine months of every year at Greenbrook, and when the brothers were together, they found the frank and affectionate intercourse of the family a safe and convenient shelter for their private feelings. Neither of them had for a long time had a distinct purpose, or been himself aware of the existence of an all-controlling sentiment. But, for a few months past, they had been waiting for the moment when their affairs should warrant the disclosure of their attachment, or any crisis

(on the brink of which lovers always seem to themselves to be) should render it inevitable. In the mean time, Emily's entrance on her vocation of teacher had been, on some pretext, deferred from spring to fall, and from fall to spring. The truth was, none of the family could bear to part with her, and even Mr. and Mrs. Barclay were for once betrayed into the delay of a most excellent plan in favor of a present indulgence.

Wallace passed a sleepless night, the first in his healthy and happy life. It was not profitless; for, during the silent watches, he firmly resolved upon an immediate and frank disclosure to Charles. This he believed would prevent, as far as it was possible to prevent them, all future regrets and unhappiness. He could not bear to risk for a moment, that the harmony and sweet affections, which had made their home a heaven, should give place to suspicion, secret jealousy, selfish competition, and possible hatred. "No," he said; "He who has commanded us to pluck out an eye if it offend us, will enable me or Charles to root out an affection which we have both innocently, though one of us blindly, cherished."

Wallace was (what all are not) true to the resolution formed in solitude; and early the next day he sought an interview with

Charles. At first it was embarrassed and painful. Charles's delicate and somewhat reserved nature was shocked by having the secret he had so long cherished, known and canvassed. But by degrees the hearts of both were opened. Their mutual confidence called forth all the vigor of their mutual affections. The noblest powers of their nature were roused; and such was the glow of fraternal love, that each felt that success with Emily would be almost as hard to bear as failure. Emily's preference must of course decide the matter, and the sooner that decision was known, they felt to be the better. Charles proposed that the whole affair should be confided to their mother, and that she should ascertain for them which way Emily's heart leaned. Wallace was disinclined to this. He had always thought he would have no medium, not even his mother in an affair of this sort. "If denial comes, it does not, Charles, matter how; but if acceptance, I would first know it from Emily's eye and lips."

The sensation that darted through Charles's bosom at this expression of Wallace, made him realize the precipice on which they stood, and stimulated his desire to have his fate decided at once. He again urged the mode he had suggested. "Let Emily," he said, "know the happiness she bestows, but never the pain

she inflicts. If I am to be her brother, Wallace, I would not for worlds that the frank affection she has shown me" ("ah, how misinterpreted!" he thought), "should be withdrawn, or shackled with reserve, — a source of suffering to us both, to us all."

Wallace at length acquiesced, and felt and said that Charles was always more considerate, more generous than he. The brothers parted, and Charles hastened with his painful confidence to his mother. The mother, always ready to bear her part in the hope and fears, success and disappointments, of her children, received his communication with tears of sympathy. But over every other feeling, — regret that the catastrophe had not been foreseen and avoided, anxiety for the future, and perplexity with the present, — the holy joy of the Christian mother triumphed; and from the depths of her heart arose a silent, fervent thanksgiving, that the religious principle of her sons had swayed their affections and been victorious over the temptations of the most subtle of the human passions.

The application of the southern lady was the theme on which Mrs. Barclay began her soundings of Emily; but how she discharged her delicate office, need not be told. A woman's management on such occasions is so marked by

the adroitness and sagacity manifested by the lower orders of creation, that we might call it by the name we give to the inspiration of the bee and the bird, and say that one woman *instinctively* finds the clew that leads through the labyrinth of another's heart.

When Charles again met his mother, he read his fate in her face. "It is as I expected," she said; "Emily herself asks 'how it could be otherwise.'"

"Mother! you did not tell her that I" —

"No, no, my son, she does not suspect the nature of your feelings; but, as I was going to tell you, she said, amid the blushes and tears of her confession, that she feared it was very wrong, received as she had been into the family, to indulge such an affection for Wallace; but she could not help it. If he had gone away, as you did, she should have loved him as she does you and her brother Harry; but to be with him every day, and every day find him more and more" —

"You need not check yourself, mother; I can bear to hear why she loves Wallace."

Mrs. Barclay was proceeding: Charles again interrupted her. "Never mind, dear mother; some other time I will hear the rest;" and he left her to still in solitude the throbbings of his heart. Something must be

allowed to human infirmity. Charles had fortunately a pretext of business, and in a few hours, without again seeing his brother or Emily, he was on his way to a distant part of the state.

Those hours which should have been the happiest of Wallace's life were clouded; but the clouds which are fraught with generous consideration for another are better than sunshine. It is good to have the joy of success tempered, the expectations of youth abated; and, above all, it is good, by personal and even bitter experience, to have our convictions strengthened, that the highest and only stable happiness results from an obedience to the sense of duty. Even in the first intoxicating moments of assured affection, the certainty of possessing Emily's love was less to Wallace than the certainty of having preserved his brother's unimpaired.

Charles's trial was the severest. His fondest hopes were suddenly annihilated. Emily, who unconsciously had shaped the plan of his life, and lit up his futurity, was lost to him for ever; but even the possession of her pure and tender heart, lovely and beloved as she was, could not have inspired the holy emotions he felt, from the assurance that his love for Wallace was not abated one jot, — that he could

contemplate his happiness, not only without a pang of envy, but with gratitude to Heaven that what was denied to him had fallen to his brother's lot.

Whence came this self-conquest? whence this power over the most selfish and exorbitant of the passions? and at that period of life when passion is strongest and reason weakest? It came from a *home* cultivation of the affections that spring from the natural and unchanging relations. It came from what the Apostle calls a "mystery," the knitting of hearts together in love; and, alas! to a great portion of the world, the power of domestic love is still a mystery. The vital principle of the religion of Christ, the pervading element of the divine nature, *love*, was the informing spirit of the Barclays' home. This inspired their exertions, and their self-restraints, and that generous sympathy which enabled each to transfuse, as it were, his existence into a brother's, — to weep when he wept, and to rejoice when he rejoiced.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAMILY LETTERS.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm than all the gloss of art.

GOLDSMITH.

To the younger members of the Greenbrook family, the announcement of Wallace's and Emily's engagement was unmingled joy. "They had always," they said, "loved her like a sister, and now she was going to be their own sister. Horrid it would have been, to have had Emily go and live on a plantation among slaves. Mother had always said that Emily would make one of the best little housewives in the world, if she did not make a wonderful teacher, and they guessed mother knew all the while what was going to happen; but that was nothing strange, mother knew every thing! And how nicely father fixed it to have Wallace and Harry Norton partners." They wondered "if father meant that all should come out so like the end of a story-book, when he took Harry and Emily home! And what would Mr. Anthon say now? Oh, he would say it was all father's *luck*! Poor Mr.

Anthon! To be sure he had bad luck enough, as he called it. John such a drunkard, and Dick acting so shockingly, and Anne quarrelling with her mother-in-law." Thus the children dwelt on results; older heads may speculate on causes.

Charles, in due time, returned to Greenbrook. His gentle and still affectionate manner (perhaps even more than usually so) betrayed no secret to Emily; but his increased thoughtfulness and occasional embarrassment did not escape his mother's vigilant eye. He was himself conscious of a weight on his spirits that he could not throw off, — an accustomed and delightful stimulus was withdrawn. It was the change from a day of sunshine and ethereal atmosphere to leaden skies and east winds. He fully realized that it was easy for a mind formed upon right principles to resolve upon a right course, but very hard to cure the same mind of long-indulged habits. There was not a walk, a view, a tree, or plant at Greenbrook, that did not tend by its associations to keep alive feelings which it was now his duty and most earnest endeavor to extinguish. Human virtues partake of the human constitution, — they are weak, and need external aid and support; the true wisdom is to find this out, and apply the remedy in time.

After a conflict of weeks and months, Charles came to the conclusion that a change of climate is sometimes as essential to the mind as the body; and having frankly disclosed his reasons to his parents, he announced to them his determination, with their approbation, to remove to Ohio. The Greenbrook farm, he said, was no more than his father could manage without him at present, and the younger boys were coming on to take his place; for himself, he should find the excitement he wanted, in the activity and novelty of a new state; and while he remembered his home, he should be stimulated to do some good, if he failed in getting all he hoped. He had communicated his plans to Wallace, and had received a letter from him filled with the most affectionate expostulations, but they had not changed his views. Charles was so important to the home circle, he filled so many places which nobody else could fill, that the whole family protested against his leaving them. His father and mother, after much anxious deliberation, were the first to acquiesce in his wishes. His removal was the greatest disappointment they had ever met with, but, once having made up their minds that it was best for him, they bore it cheerfully. Self-sacrifice is so common in good parents, that it strikes

us no more than the falling of the rain, or the shining of the sun, or any other natural result of the beneficent arrangements of Providence.

Charles's departure was loudly lamented by the good people of Greenbrook. They liberally used the right which all social country gossips assume on such occasions, and "judged it a poor move for such a young man as Charles Barclay to leave his *privileges* in New England to rough it in the West. However, it was nothing strange; all the boys caught the western fever now-a-days." But deeply as Charles regretted the "privileges" of a more advanced state of society, and above all the "privilege" of his blessed home, he had no reason to regret the vigorous resolution he had taken, when he found his mind recovering its cheerful tone, without which all the "privileges" that the happiest son of New England ever toiled for and enjoyed, would have been unavailing to him. The healthful state of his mind, the "prosperity of his heart," is best exhibited in the following extract from a letter to his mother: —

"I have profited by father's rule to drive out private and personal griefs by devotion to the well-being of others. Life is indeed too short to be wasted in brooding over disappointment, and I am convinced there is much

more of selfishness than of sensibility in this brooding. The affections are given to us for activity and diffusion, — they are the fire to warm, not to consume us. I am a living witness, dear mother, against the corrupting eloquence we meet with in novels and poetry to persuade us that true love is an unconquerable passion; I did love long and truly, as you know. My affections were worthily placed, and at first, I confess, I thought it impossible they should ever cease to be exclusively devoted to that one object. I remember the night before I left you, when I was expressing my dread of the solitariness that awaited me at my new residence, father said, ‘O my son, you will soon have a family around you.’ I replied querulously, ‘I never shall have a family!’ and I secretly wondered that father could so have forgotten the feelings of his youth, as to think that I could. Now I look forward to such an event as possible; my heart is free.

“I have much reason to rejoice that I came here; there is no time in these busy new settlements to look back. ‘The go-ahead principle keeps hands and heads at work, — and hearts too, dear mother. Do not imagine that in our eager devotion to physical wants, we forget what belongs to the lasting and nobler part of our nature. I have literally made

a circulating library of the books father gave me, and if your household maxim holds good here, and 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating,' the eagerness with which they are devoured is a proof that they were well selected. I have built a small log-house, with two apartments, at a short distance from the good family where I get my meals. One of the apartments is my bedroom, and I assure you it has quite a home look. A little pine table in the corner of the room is covered with the merino cloth which Mary and Haddy embroidered with braids for me; there is my flute, my portfolio, and the little pile of books that was always on my table at home,—then the quilt the girls made of bits of their pretty frocks is on my bed,—the curtains Emily hemmed and fringed, before my windows. All these home memorials with your sweet picture hanging over the fireplace, do confoundedly blur my eyes sometimes.

"The other apartment is, at present, a reading-room. I have induced the young men to join me in a society which we call (you know we are fond of grand names in these parts) *Philomathian*. Our Philos subscribe for half a dozen newspapers, and three periodicals. They remain a week at the reading-room, where we meet evenings and rainy days.

These meetings keep alive a social spirit, and a barter trade of our ideas, by which all gain, some more and some less. All gain, I say, and so it is; for the most humble has something peculiar in his observations and experience, by which those that are more highly endowed, and far better instructed, may profit. After a certain time our papers, &c., are put in circulation for the benefit of the womankind. My little reading-room serves another purpose that will particularly please you, mother. We meet in it every Sabbath morning for religious service. I am reader to our little congregation. I find the sermons and other devotional books father selected, admirably adapted to our purpose. I began with reading prayers; but our settlers, being chiefly from New England, prefer an extempore service. At first I felt *bashful* at being their organ, and, I confess it with shame, I thought more of those who were around me than of Him whom I addressed; but I soon learned to abstract myself, and to enter into the spirit of my petitions. We are but an extended family circle, perfectly acquainted with each other's condition, and feeling one another's wants; after our service we have a Sunday school. I adopt my father's mode of passing the afternoon as far as practicable here. I visit the sick and

the afflicted, and, where there are no such paramount claims, I impart what religious and moral instruction I can to the children, and to the ignorant who are but grown-up children.

“Tell father the slips of fruit-trees he gave me, are thriving on many a sunny patch,—growing while we are sleeping; and pray tell the girls, that their last package of flower seeds arrived safely, and they have come up famously. Eve had not a finer soil for her culture in Paradise than we have here. Flowers grow like weeds, and I know many a village in *old* Massachusetts — shame to them! — that has not so many of these luxuries as there are in our little settlement which has been opened to the sun but three years.

“I assisted two little barefoot girls to-day to train a native clematis (a pretty species), over the logs of their hut. There is a honeysuckle and white rose clambering over my window, that came from slips I cut, — *you know where*, mother, the morning I left home. How soon may we plant a paradise in the wilds if we will! The physical, moral, and intellectual soil is ready; it only wants the spirit of cultivation.

“That honeysuckle and white rose! They have recalled images of the past, but they are

no longer spectres that trouble, but spirits that soothe me. How I wish I could be with you on the happy occasion at hand! I cannot, so there is an end of wishing; but pray tell Wallace, with my best love, that I rejoice in his joy, and have no feeling that may not exist when all marrying and giving in marriage is past, and we meet, as I humbly trust we shall, a family in heaven."

The happy occasion alluded to by Charles, was the double marriage of Alice and Harry Norton, Wallace and Emily.

"What a pity you were not here, dear Charles!" wrote Mary Barclay to her brother, "we had such a delightful wedding. At first it was decided it should be quite private. Emily wished it so, and mother rather preferred it; but Alice, who, as father says, always goes for 'the greatest happiness to the greatest number,' said that she was to be married but once in her life, and that those who could get pleasure from looking at her, were quite welcome to it. The girls were dressed sweetly, but unexpensively; for father, you know, thinks a wedding a poor excuse for extravagance, or, to express it as he would, a woman is unfit to assume the most serious cares and responsibilities of life till she better esti-

mates the uses of money than to invest it in blond and pearls, — a common rigging nowadays, even for portionless brides. Our brides looked pretty enough, in all conscience, in white muslins and natural flowers. Father and mother had a long talk with us the evening before, and we did all our crying then, and one and all resolved we would have nothing but smiles at the wedding. Good old Mr. Marvin performed the ceremony. He was rather long and particular, and too *plain spoken*; but his age and right intentions were a warrant for his freedom, and his earnest feeling made amends for all. You remember his ‘narrative style’ in prayer. He told our whole family history, and such a ‘patriarch’ as he made of father! such a ‘mother in Israel’ of mother! and such ‘plants and polished corner-stones’ of their sons and daughters! There was an allusion that shocked us all to poor old Mr. Norton, and father’s Christian conduct towards him, but happily it was so wrapped in Scripture phraseology, that I doubt if any understood it but such as were acquainted with the particulars. But when he spoke of the blessed issues of that painful business, — of the gentle Ruth and faithful Jacob (these were the names by which he designated Harry and Emily), who had been trained under our roof in the

'nurture and admonition of the Lord,' all hearts were touched. The only missing member of the family, dear Charles, was not forgotten, and we all joined in the earnest petition that the spirit of your father's house might rest on your new home; and that the waste places around you might blossom as the rose.

"After the ceremony, the crying, (alas, for our previous resolution!) the kissing, and the wishing were over, a tower of wedding-cake was set on the centre-table, wreathed, as Emily had requested, with roses and honeysuckles from those you planted for her. In spite of the searching and scrambling among the *ready* candidates for future weddings, little Effie got the ring. Fortune pets her as well as we. However, I suspected this was a contrivance of Biddy's, whose true Irish love of merry-making has been all called forth on this occasion. By the way, Biddy is an inexpressible comfort since we came to Greenbrook, where the family work is so much increased. She takes all the burden of it from Martha, and is as dutiful to her as a child could be. Martha says herself, she is paid a hundred-fold for all the trouble she had with her.

"The brides leave us to-morrow, and I am so busy that I must finish my letter with half our wedding festivities untold: how they danced

while I played; how Captain Fisher, who in his youth was drummer in a militia company, sent home for his old drum and played *en amateur* an accompaniment to the 'White Cockade,' and 'Haste to the Wedding!' — how the kind old people, who used to think dancing a sin, looked on complacently. They grow wiser, and we more rational.

"How lonesome we shall be to-morrow! Oh, dear me! I wish, as Willie used to say, we had 'a big banging house where all my peoples as loves one another could live together and not make a noise.' Do you remember, Charles? It seems but yesterday that we all laughed at this outbreak of the loving little fellow's heart, and now he is getting a beard, and looking mannish. Well, the accomplishment of Willie's wish is reserved for a happier condition of existence, when we shall no more have to toil in cities, or go to the forests to make new abodes. Then, dear Charles, shall we dwell together in one home. Till then, *then*, yours, dear brother,

"Most affectionately,

"MARY BARCLAY."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONCLUSION.

"Thy mercy bids all nature bloom;
The sun shines bright and man is gay;
Thine equal mercy spreads the gloom,
That darkens o'er his little day."

"WHAT man is there that liveth and shall not see death?" The import of these words comes home at some time or other to every bosom. Some think of death at a moment of sudden alarm, in seasons of sickness, or in the silent watches of the night, when the ministry of the senses is suspended, and the consciousness of mortality presses on the spirit. But should not the thought of death be associated with the necessary pursuits and cheerful occupations of life? Not introduced like the skeleton at the Egyptian feasts, to mingle gloom with gayety, but to give a just coloring and weight to the affairs of life by enabling us to estimate them in relation to this great circumstance of existence, habitually to associate life with immortality, — all action here with accountability and retribution hereafter.

"Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come."

If a heathen, to whom the grave was still wrapped in silence and darkness, could, from the mere consideration that death was inevitable, be supposed to await it with firmness, what ought we to expect from the Christian, for whom life and immortality have been brought to light, — who believes that there is a place prepared for him in his Father's house ?

Does he believe that death is but a brief passage, a "circumstance" of life ? that there is no *death* to those who believe in Jesus ? that the mortal shall put on immortality ? that death shall be swallowed up in victory ? If these are not words, but articles of faith, why does death bring such dismay and gloom into the home of the Christian ? If Jesus were now to appear to his disciples, would he not have much reason to say to them, "O ye of little faith ?"

Early in the autumn following the marriage of his children, Mr. Barclay returned from his usual daily walk to the village post-office with a letter in his hand. His face indicated anxiety and sorrow. Every eye was fixed on him for explanation. He gave the letter to Mrs. Barclay, and turning to the children said, "Your brother Charles is ill with a fever."

"Very ill, father ?"

"Yes, Effie ; and he had been so for ten days when the letter was written."

"O father! and we have all been so happy when Charles perhaps was" — "dying," she would have said, but there are words hard to apply to those whose lives seem to be a portion of our own.

"Do not you think, Effie, it would have grieved Charles to have abated one particle of your happiness?"

"O yes, it would, father. Charles always loved to have us glad, and never sorry, and he always made us glad. But we shall never be glad again if he dies."

"Never, Effie?" Her father took her on his knee. "And what would Charles think, if we never could be happy because it had pleased our heavenly Father to take him a little before us to heaven?"

"I don't know, sir, what people think in heaven, but I know what we feel on earth. Do you think he will die, father?" she added very softly, and laying her cheek to her father's.

"I fear he must, my child." The children, whose eyes were on their father, as if awaiting a sentence of life or death, could no longer restrain their tears. Mary and her mother were eagerly reading the letter. They too thought Charles must die, and when they had read through the physician's statement, and saw at

the end of it, "*God's will be done,*" written almost illegibly in Charles's hand, Mary hid her face on her mother's heaving bosom. Mr. Barclay took the letter and showed the line to the younger children. "Let us, too, my dear children, try honestly to say 'God's will be done.' Let us all bow down before our Father in heaven, and ask him to give us the spirit of obedience and faith, that we may quietly submit to his holy will." They all gathered around him, and as they knelt with him they caught the spirit of his expressions of trust, — they felt what it was to be the children of light, and not of darkness, — of the light from heaven which shines through the gospel of Christ.

Two days must pass before farther intelligence could be received. In the mean time the sad news spread through Greenbrook, and a general sympathy pervaded the little community. Charles's gracious qualities had commended him to all hearts, and each family felt as if it were menaced with a calamity. When the stage-coach arrived, by which, as all knew, news must come from Charles, and Mr. Barclay was seen riding towards the post-office, many an eager and tearful eye followed him. "The mail is not opened, sir," said the postmaster. By this time several persons had

left their business, and were approaching to get the first intelligence. "Oh, that I could get my letter and be away with it!" thought Mr. Barclay, reluctant, as every delicate person is, to betray emotion before observers. He was recalled to his better feelings.

"Shall I hold your horse for you, Mr. Barclay?" asked a voice almost for the first time low and gentle.

"Thank you, Dow," he replied; and giving him the bridle, he dismounted. Dow was a demi-outlaw, who lived on the outskirts of Greenbrook. Every man's face was set against him, and his against every man except Charles Barclay. And why was he an exception? "Charles," he said, "had treated him like a human creature had done him many a good turn, and had many a laugh with him;" and now Dow had come from his mountain-hut, and stood with his rifle in his hand, and his shaggy cur at his side, awaiting the first breath of news from Charles.

"What are you standing there for?" said the postmaster to a little girl on the doorstep: "you are in my light, child."

"Mother wants to know, sir, what's in the letter." "Mother" was the widow Ely, to whom Charles had done many an unforgotten kindness.

"He's got a letter, has not he?" exclaimed old blind Palmer, whose quick ear caught the breaking of the seal. "Hush, Meddler!" he added, laying his hand on the head of the sagacious little terrier Charles had given him, and eagerly listening for the first word that should be uttered. Mr. Barclay devoured the contents of the letter at a glance, then threw it on the table, mounted his horse, and galloped homeward.

"He is dead!" exclaimed one.

"I do not believe it," said another.

"He has left the letter." "He has left it for us to read," was the natural conclusion. They did accordingly read the few lines announcing that the fever had reached its crisis and the patient was convalescing; and they were just about to say "how strangely Mr. Barclay had acted," when they felt their voices broken by their own emotions, and they realized how much more difficult it might be to control an unexpected joy, than a grief painfully prepared for.

After this came regular and encouraging accounts from Charles; but the first letter from himself, written with apparent effort, and at long intervals, checked their hopes. He expressed with manly piety his deep gratitude for the experience of his sickness. Over and

over again, he thanked his parents for his religious education. He said that a tranquil reliance on the mercy of God, and faith in the immortality revealed by Christ and assured by his resurrection, had never for a moment forsaken him. He had but one inextinguishable earthly desire, and that was to see home. "Home and Heaven, blended together in his thoughts by day and his dreams by night." The letter was filled with the most tender longings for a sight of his mother's face, — his father, and each brother and sister, were named in the most endearing language.

Soon after came a letter informing them that symptoms of a rapid consumption had appeared, which no longer admitted a doubt as to the termination of the disease, and that he had determined immediately to make an effort to reach home. He intended to embark the next day for New Orleans, whence he should go to New York, where he hoped to meet his parents. The letter indicated perfect firmness and tranquillity of mind. It contained his wishes as to the disposition of his effects. Some memorial was allotted to each member of the family, not forgetting Martha and Biddy; and some poor Greenbrook friends were remembered by bequests adapted to their necessities.

At the end of a few weeks he arrived at New York, where his parents were awaiting him, and whence they conveyed him by slow stages to Greenbrook. For the last few miles he was borne on a litter. His father, Wallace, and Harry Norton aiding to carry, or walking beside him, till his eyes rested on his beloved home, where, on every side, were traces of his tasteful and diligent hand.

Mary, with thoughtful care, had arranged his room precisely as he left it. When they laid him on his bed, no emotion was visible save a slight fluttering at his heart. His face was placid, and from his eye, which literally glowed, there came "holy revealings." He was alone with his brother. "O Wallace," he said, raising his eye gratefully to Him who had granted his last earthly prayer, "how pleasant it is to be here! how I longed for this! Oh! *home! home!* Open wide those blinds, Wallace," — he pointed to the east window opposite his bed. "Now raise my head and let it rest on your breast. I always loved to look on those hills when the sun was going down!"

It was one of those moments in the harmonies of nature, when the outward world seems to answer to the spirit. The valley was in deep shadow, while the summit of the hills

rich with the last softened, serious tints of autumn, was lighted, — kindled, with the rays of the sun. “The falling leaf! and the setting sun!” said Charles, without expressing in words the relation to his own condition so manifest. “Is it not beautiful, Wallace?”

“Yes, very beautiful!” faintly echoed Wallace, his eye fixed on his brother’s pale, serene brow, where it seemed to him there was a more beautiful light, — light from Heaven. As Wallace gently rested his cheek on that brow, what a contrast in the two faces, and yet what harmony! His was rich with health and untouched vitality. His eyes were suffused with tears, his brow contracted, and his lips compressed with the effort to subdue his struggling feelings. The beautiful coloring of health had long and for ever forsaken Charles. His cheeks were sunken, and there were dark shadows in their cavities; but there was an ineffable sweetness, a something like the repose of satisfied infancy on his lips, and such tranquillity on his smooth brow, that it seemed as if the seal of eternal peace were set there. A tear fell from Wallace’s cheek on his. Charles faintly smiled, and looking up he said, “Why are you troubled, my dear brother? I am not, — kiss me, Wallace. Thank God, dear brother, our hearts have never been divided, — and yet we were tried.”

"You were,— you were, Charles!" Wallace's voice in spite of his efforts was choked.

"Well, Wallace, if you have children, bring them up in that strict family love in which we were brought up. 'God is love,' and wherever love is, there cannot be strifes and envyings."

After a night of as much repose as could be obtained in Charles's circumstances, and made sweet to him by the sense of being under his father's roof, each member of the family was admitted to his apartment.

"This is too much happiness!" he said, as he welcomed one after another to his bedside.

He was too weak for sustained conversation; but some seasonable and never-to-be-forgotten words he uttered at intervals. And inquiries were to be made about the condition of the garden, and the grounds, and the affairs of the Greenbrook neighborhood, all evincing that there was nothing in his past pursuits and interests discordant with his present circumstances. He wished his sisters to bring in their work-baskets ("I cannot spare *your* hand, mother," he said, pressing his lips to it when he made the request), that he might see them at their usual employments, and have more completely the feeling of being at home.

This was the first time that death had come into Mr. Barclay's habitation. He was re-

ceived not as an enemy, but as an expected friend, — as the messenger of God. The affections were not cooled nor abated, (was this ever the effect of religion?) and therefore their countenances were sad, and their hearts sorrowful; but it was sorrow without bitterness or repining. The visible domestic chain was for the first time to be broken, — a precious link for a time severed. The event was attended with peculiar disappointment to Mr. Barclay. Without favoritism there is often, perhaps always, a closer tie to one child than to another. There was a perfect sympathy between Charles and his father. Their minds seemed cast in the same mould. They had the same views and purposes in life — the same resolute, steady application of their theories. Mr. Barclay had relied on Charles to be the guide and support of his younger children. But God had ordered it otherwise, and he submitted, as a Christian should submit, in the spirit of love and of a sound mind.

For two days Charles's disease seemed to be suspended, and the energies of nature to be called forth by moral causes; but on the third day he appeared to be rapidly sinking away. He could now only endure an upright position. His head rested on his mother's bosom. Little Effie, who read truly the fixed and

intense looks of the family, but who could not imitate their calmness, shrunk behind her mother sobbing aloud.

"Come here, Effie," said her brother, "why do you cry?"

"Because Charles" — she could not speak the rest.

"Because I must die, Effie?"

"Yes," she faintly answered.

"It is not hard to die, dear Effie, — not if we love God, not if we believe the promises of Christ. Come closer, Effie, I cannot speak loud; I am going home, to a home like this, for love is there; to a better home than this, for there, there is neither sickness nor sorrow" —

"Rest now, my dear son," said the tender mother, as Charles paused from exhaustion and closed his eyes.

"First, mother, let me tell Effie what is best of all in that home. There is no sin there, Effie."

"O Charles! you never did any thing wrong here."

"My dear little sister, I have done and felt much that was wrong, and it is because I know our God is a God of forgiveness and tender mercy, that I hope to be accepted of Him. Kiss me, Effie, — be a good girl, and when you

come to lie on a sick bed you will have a great many pleasant thoughts. Mary, my dear sister, do not grieve so, — we shall very soon meet again. Alice, one last word, my sister, — do not give your heart too much to the world. Emily, my dear sister, too, we shall be one family in heaven.”

These and a few more short sentences (ever after treasured in faithful hearts) Charles uttered at long intervals; then, after a short pause, he said, “I am very weak, — father, lay your hand upon my breast here, — what does this mean?”

His father perceived the tokens of dissolution; “It is death, my dear child,” he replied. Wallace offered to take his mother’s place; — “No,” said Charles, “my head is easiest on mother’s bosom; mother, you are not afraid to see me die?”

“Oh, no, no, my son!”

“Nor am I afraid to die, mother; God hath redeemed my soul from the power of the grave. Father, pray with us.”

All felt their weakness, and the necessity for a stronger than a human arm to lean upon, and they bowed themselves in supplication to their Father in heaven, as children in trouble fly to the arms of their parents. The demands of the soul at such a moment are pressing and

few. They were briefly expressed by the tender parent in the language of Scripture, — in words that in great exigencies are felt to convey the oracles of God.

"Thank you, dear father," said Charles, "I am better for this." He looked around on each one of the family, and said "*It is* hard parting, — but there is sweet peace here."

His voice had become more indistinct, and his spirit seemed to rise from the home where it lingered to that which awaited it. His lips still moved as if in prayer. Suddenly he raised both hands, and said clearly, "Thanks be to God who giveth" — the bodily organs were too feeble for the parting soul. His father finished the sentence : "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Charles bowed his head. A few moments longer they watched his ebbing life, and he was gone, gently as a child falls asleep on its mother's bosom. A deep, holy silence followed. It seemed as if all heard the voice of God, "It is I, be not afraid."

But then came the mortal feeling, the sense of separation, the poignant anguish of the parting stroke, and sighs and tears broke forth. They laid their cheeks to his, they kissed his forehead, his hands, sobbing, "Charles! — dear, blessed brother!"

The mother sat motionless, her son's head still resting on her bosom. She could not bear to change this last manifestation of his love to her. Mr. Barclay gently disengaged him from her arms, and laid him on the pillow, saying as he did so, "He was our *first-born!*"

What a world to the parent there is in these few words! They recall the hours of brightest, freshest hope, and deepest gratitude. They express what has been dearest and happiest in life, and when Mr. Barclay, after a moment's pause, added in a firmer voice, "The Lord gave,—the Lord hath taken away,—blessed be his name," it was the meek Christian triumphing over the man and father.

"My children," he said, "it is finished. Now let us unite our hearts in thanksgiving to God for the life and death of your dear brother." They all knelt, while with a steady voice he poured out his heart. Memory, kindled by love, lighted up Charles's past life, and all, as it passed in review, was the subject, not of lamentation that it was gone, but of pious gratitude that it had been enjoyed. He blessed God for the healthful infancy of his son; for the obedience and docility of his childhood; for the progressive knowledge and virtue of his youth; and above all, for

the faith in Jesus that had given effect to his life, and peace in the hour of death.

We have seen Mr. Barclay's home at its first consecration; we have seen it when the tender lights of blissful infancy fell upon it; when it was filled with the life, activity, and hope of joyous youth; when the poor and the orphan were gathered under the wing of its succoring charities; when pecuniary losses were met with tranquillity and dignity; when social pleasures clustered round its hearthstone; when sons and daughters were given in happy marriage; but never have we seen an hour so blessed, as that which bore the assurance that death hath no sting, the grave no victory, in the home of the Christian.

